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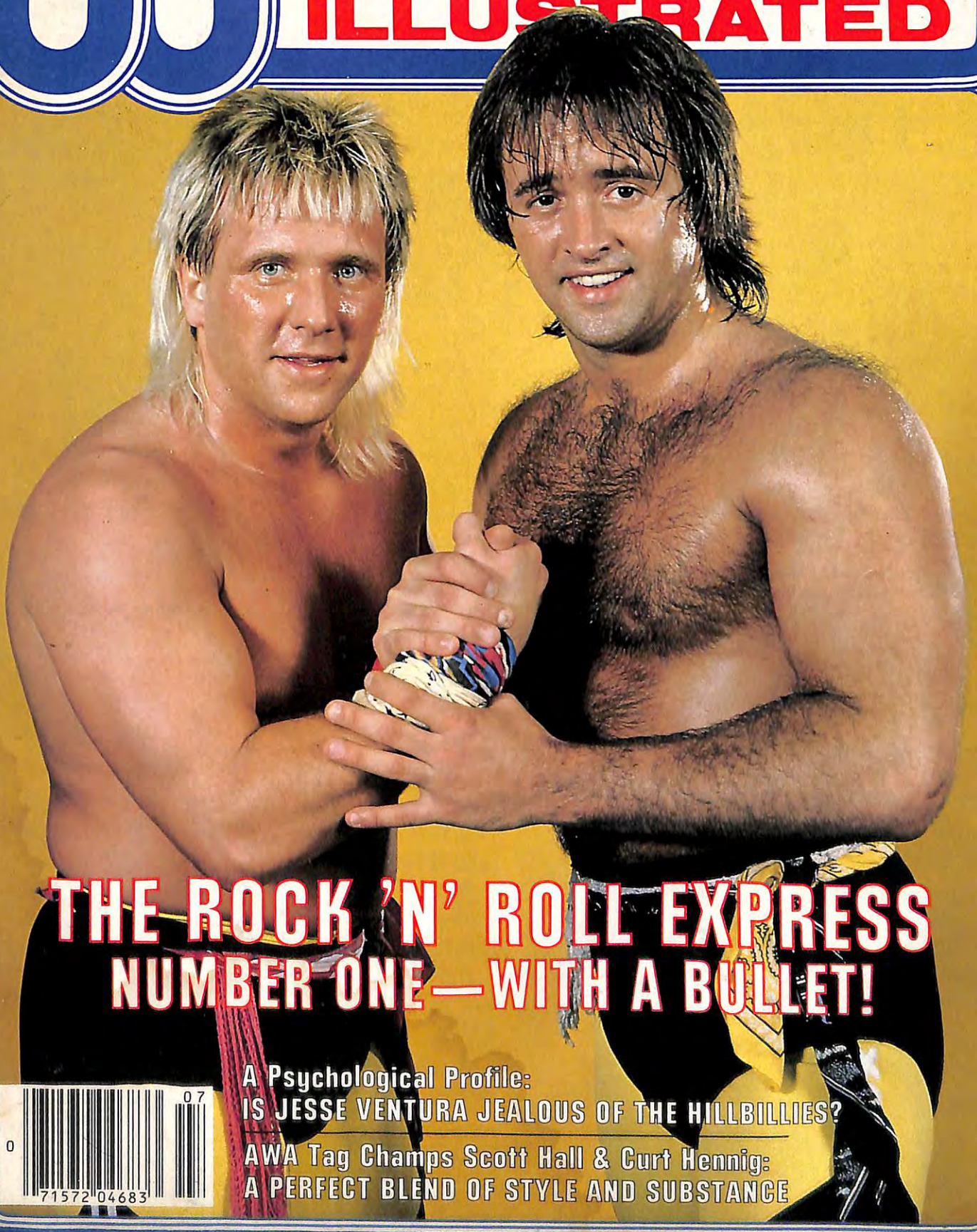

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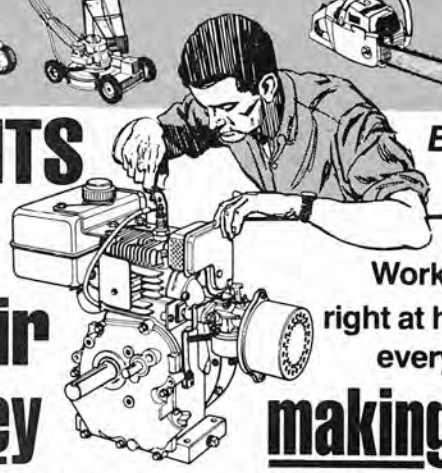

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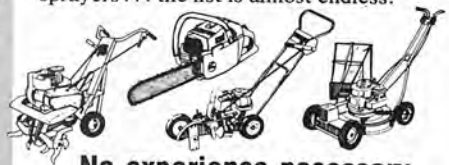

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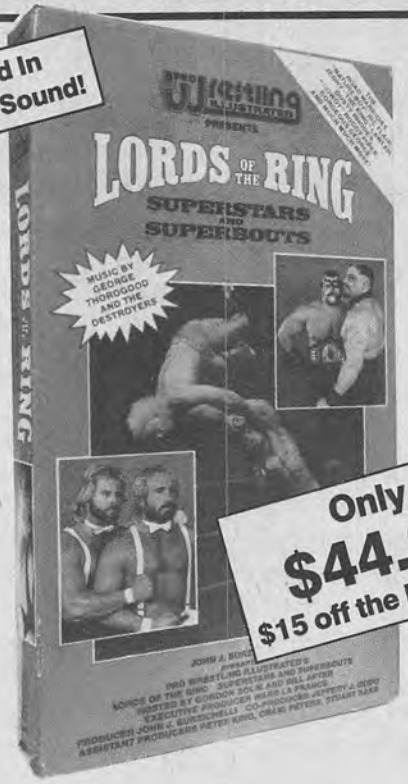
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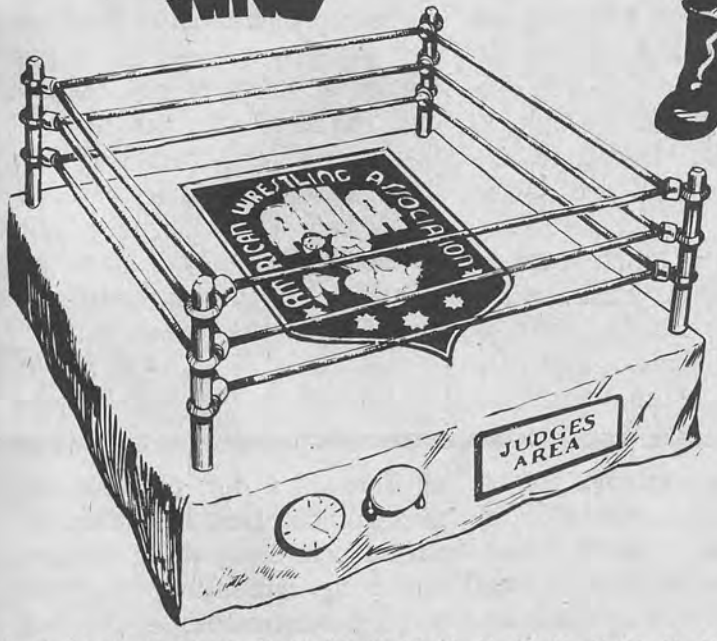

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CONTEST RESPONSE

I entered the "Meet The Road Warriors" (*PWI*, May 1986) contest and I hope I win. I'd like to meet Hawk and Animal and tell them how much they've changed my life. A year ago, on my 15th birthday, I was 5'8" and weighed 107 pounds. I could count my friends on one hand. I was without confidence and often the butt of cruel jokes and pranks, the punching bag of the cafeteria bullies. At night I would imagine elaborate punishment for my tormentors, devising brilliant and brutal devices with which I'd exact my revenge.

Of course, my hopes remained nothing but bottled dreams—my size denied me the strength to exact any revenge. Until, that is, when I inadvertently saw Hawk and Animal wrestling on television. What power! What courage! And their interviews were as stunningly vicious as their matches.

I became inspired. I practically moved into my local gym. My appetite picked up, my weight increased. I enrolled in several martial arts classes; I began to box. As

GIANT FULL-COLOR PINUP OF RICK STEAMBOAT
STAN HANSEN WINS THE AWA WORLD TITLE FROM RICK MARTEL!
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You Can't Teach An Old Manager New Tricks: IS LOU ALBANO RUINING THE BRITISH BULLDOGS?

my body grew, so did my confidence and my circle of friends. The bullies stopped bothering me after I took the biggest one out with right cross to the nose. Today, a scant year later, I weigh 175 pounds of solid, poised muscle spread over a proud and defiant 5'10" frame.

And I owe it all to the Warriors. They were able to communicate their strength to me. I'm living example of their power. And as I have evolved, so can others. The Warriors will spawn a society of mighty, emboldened athletes dispensing justice and glory throughout of the world. I am happy to be a part of the organization.

HENRY LONGERO
Miami, FL

Your Road Warrior contest is another example of the innovation that's made *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* the most intelligent, readable, and interesting magazine on the stands today. You're darn right I want to meet The Road Warriors. I want to meet them to show them what it takes to be a real man. I served two tours of duty in Vietnam. My buddies and I encountered the precipice every damn morning, wondering whether today was the day we would buy the bullet. Most of my buddies did. The Road Warriors boast of their strength and courage. If I win the contest I'll take them to a couple of bars where the people are so belligerent, they'd make the Warriors barf in fear. And that would make one helluva story.

JOE BURNS
Chicago

PRETTY IN PINK?

As a longtime admirer of Adrian Adonis, I am disgusted and outraged by his new identity. His "Adorable" persona puts an embarrassing tarnish on an otherwise brilliant and brutal career. The way he and Dick Murdoch terrorized their way to the WWF tag team championship is forgotten. Adonis' poor emulation of Gorgeous George, Exotic Adrian Street, and other would-be *femme fatales* is as bizarre as it is pathetic. Jimmy Hart takes credit for putting Adrian "in touch" with his real identity. Someone should put Hart in touch with a live electrical socket. Through a deft psychological manipulation, Hart has taken an athlete possessing world championship capabilities and turned him into an androgynous elephant. If only Adonis could realize the utter fool he is making of himself. If he persists in this distasteful image, I

(Continued on page 48)

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Ques. *If yours is such a great business, how come it has never been done before?*
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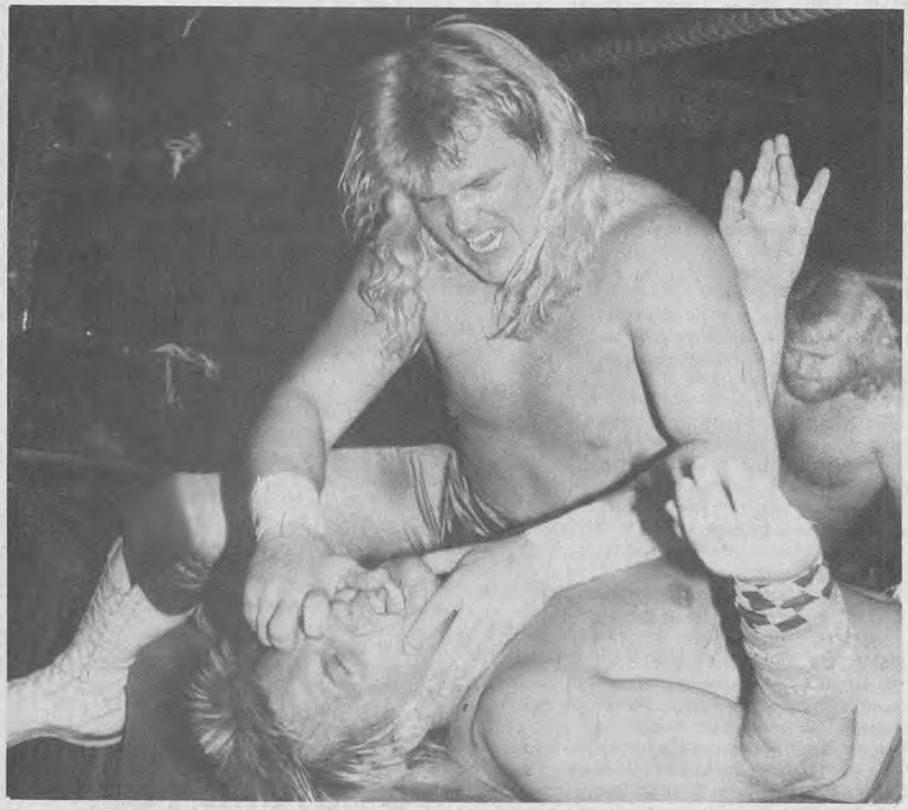

Beautiful Bobby Eaton rips into Rick Morton during one match in the brutal series between The Midnight Express and The Rock 'n' Roll Express. Both teams have entered the Jim Crockett Sr. Memorial Cup Tournament.

WITH THE APRIL 7 WrestleMania 2 lacking the effervescence and aura of excitement that made last year's WrestleMania the national media event it was (can wrestling fans *really* get excited over **Mr. T** vs. **Bob Orton** in a boxing match?), the first annual **Jim Crockett Sr.** Memorial Cup Tournament is shaping up as the card of the year.

The tournament, scheduled to take place on April 19 at the Superdome in New Orleans, promises a million-dollar prize to the winning tag team that manages to wade through the nearly two dozen teams already signed. The winning team will also receive a large cup, similar to the Stanley Cup in hockey. The team will have its name engraved on the cup, and be allowed to keep it until next year's tournament.

Pro Wrestling Illustrated magazine was provided with a list of teams that would participate in the tournament, and was asked to determine the tournament seedings. As of press time, the editorial staff decided the first eight positions (teams with lower numbers will not have to wrestle as often as other teams; first round matchups have yet to be determined as of press time): 1—**The Road Warriors**; 2—**Dusty Rhodes** and **Magnum T.A.**; 3—**The Midnight Express**; 4—**Ric Flair** and **Arn Anderson**; 5—**Rick Martel** and **Dino Bravo**; 6—**The Rock 'n' Roll Express**; 7—**Shohei Baba** and **Tiger Mask**; 8—**Ivan** and **Nikita Koloff**.

Other teams participating in the tournament will include: **Wahoo McDaniel** and **Mark Youngblood**, **Tully Blanchard** and **Jim Garvin**, **The Guerreros**, **The Sheepherders**, **The Fabulous Ones**, **Bobby Jaggers** and **Mike Miller**, **Konga the Barbarian** and **Baron Von Raschke**, **Jimmy Valiant** and **Manny Fernandez**, **Sam Houston** and **Nelson Royal**, **Bill Dundee** and **Dutch Mantel**, **The Battens**, and several more teams to be determined by tournaments in the Mid-South area.

Theoretically, the final rounds of the tournament could see such unique matchups as Flair and Anderson vs. Martel and Bravo, The Road Warriors vs. The Sheepherders, or The Rock 'n' Roll Express vs. Rhodes and T.A. How would Dusty and T.A. wrestle against their friends **Rick Morton** and **Robert Gibson** should such a matchup occur? "We're gonna

(Continued on page 53)

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KING'S COURT

By Peter King

I USUALLY DON'T print letters from fans in this column. I figure that's what "Between Falls" is all about. But I recently received an extraordinary letter from someone who just signed himself "A Fan." (He explained his signature by writing, "If Terry Allen [Magnum T.A.] can use a dumb name, so can I.") While I don't have the space to comment on everything A Fan wrote, I would like to talk about a few of his comments.

Every week, Ron Garvin punishes, humiliates, and does everything but spit on preliminary wrestlers that can't lick his boots. Since when is a ***closed*** *fist legal? According to David (Cheerleader) Crockett it is, and he wants us to feel proud that this kind of "man" represents us.* ***That's bull!***

There are some good points here. First, A Fan is right—closed-fist smashes are definitely not legal. And perhaps Ron Garvin does use excessive force in some of his TV matches. But most referees will never disqualify anyone for throwing just one or two closed fists. If they did, we would see every match end in a disqualification. As to Ronnie's punishment of some of his overmatched foes, well, they signed contracts to wrestle him and they should know what to expect. I believe that A Fan expects scientific wrestlers to be whiter than white and purer than pure. Ronnie Garvin is trying to become NWA champion, not a saint. Overall, Garvin's ring demeanor is more than acceptable to me.

Ronnie Garvin staggers Ted DiBiase with an overhand right. "A Fan" wants to know why Garvin gets away with using closed-fist punches.

Why can't Terry Allen go by his real name. Calling himself Magnum T.A. is just childish garbage. What's he going to go by next, ***Cosby*** *T.A.? Personally, I think Allen can beat anybody, including Ric Flair, if he'd stop worrying about everybody else. Dusty Rhodes can take care of himself, and Terry should tell Nikita to take a flying leap and he should concentrate on Ric Flair. He won't do that, though, because he's got the Tommy Rich Syndrome of being everything he shouldn't be.*

Some more good points. But as to why Terry Allen calls himself Magnum T.A., I think again A Fan is expecting his wrestlers to be above all natural laws. T.A. started calling himself that early in his career when it's important that a wrestler's name sticks in fans' and promoters' minds. It's like this in many fields. Or do you think that that black star in *The Color Purple* was born with the name Whoopi Goldberg? Just like Magnum, she changed her name to get ahead. There's nothing wrong with that. Today, both Magnum and Whoopi are recognized for their talent, not their unusual names. Now, I do agree that T.A. is unduly concerned with his friends' welfare. But, on the other hand, if he wasn't so concerned, he wouldn't be the man fans look up to. And as for T.A. telling Nikita to "take a flying leap," if he did that, the NWA would tell T.A. to take a flying leap. Remember, T.A. is the U.S. champion, and if he didn't defend against Nikita, he would be stripped of the title. I don't think that's a good move for

(Continued on page 52)

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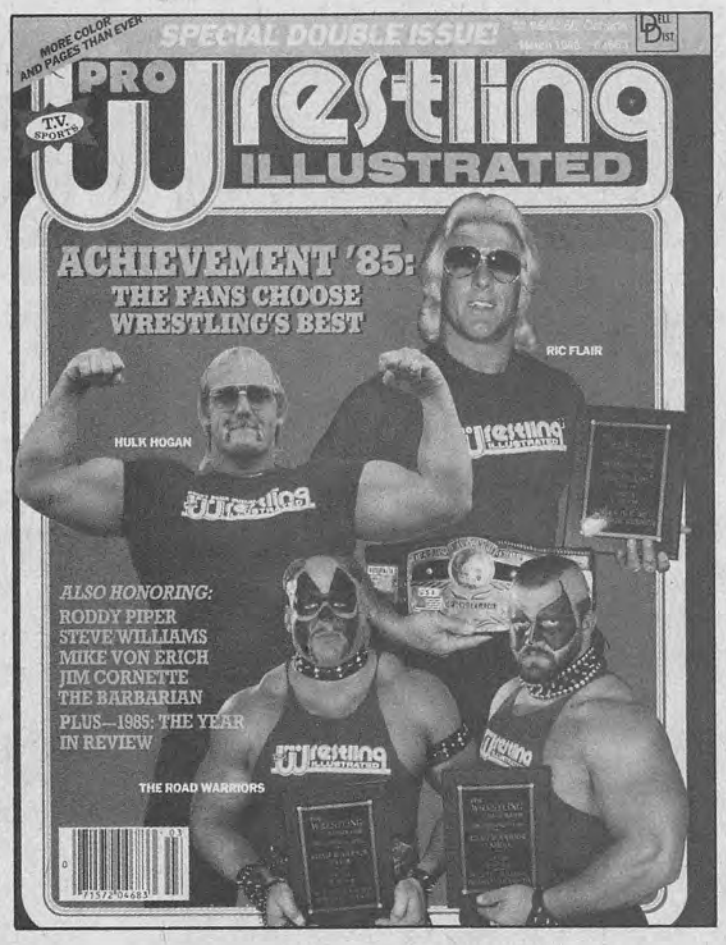

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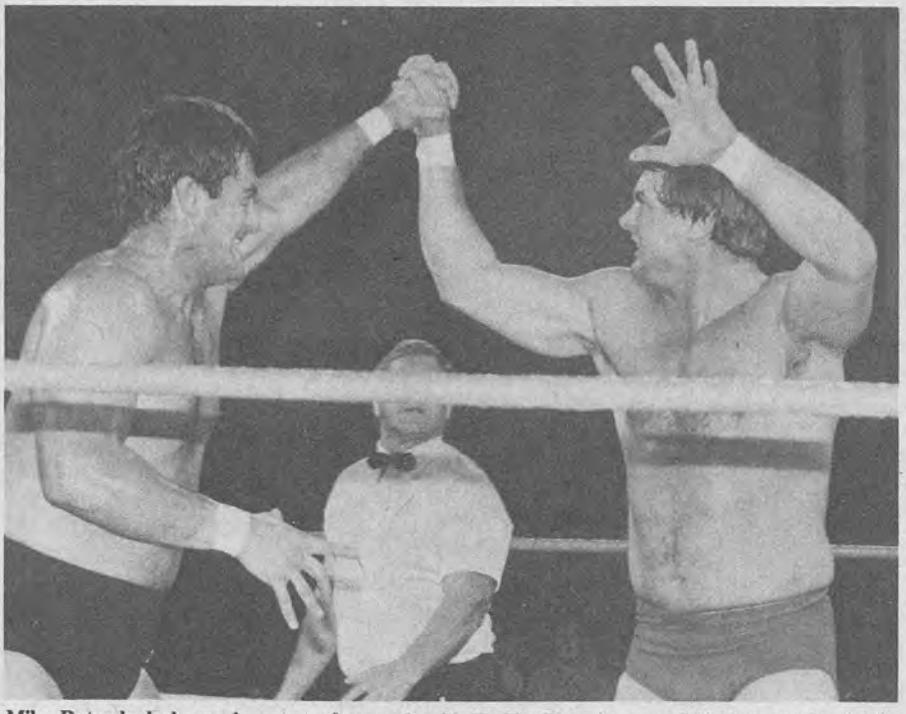
DRESSING ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

By Stu Saks



Mike Rotundo locks up in a test of strength with Roddy Piper in one of his last matches in the WWF. Rotundo has reunited with Barry Windham for a tour of Japan, and the former two-time WWF tag team champions are expected to wrestle in Florida and the AWA.

PETER KING AND I were eating breakfast at the Holiday Inn in Montreal, trying to build enough strength for our six-hour drive back to New York. There was a young man sitting by himself toward the rear of the dining room. He looked incredibly like the wrestler we had seen the night before at the Paul Sauve Arena. The guy who wrestled in the first match and impressed the hell out of us.

"What was his name again?" I asked Peter.

"Mike something," he said.

"Is that him?" I asked.

"Gotta be," Pete responded, suddenly adding, "Rotundo. That's his name. Mike Rotundo!"

Four years later, Mike Rotundo would not be able to sit alone in a restaurant without being mobbed by fans. Today he is one of the most successful and sought-after wrestlers in the sport. But in February 1982, having just made his North American debut and sitting alone with his bruises and cornflakes, he would have loved for somebody—anybody—to recognize him. "I'm gonna go over and say hello," Peter said. "Join me?"

I declined. I have a terrible memory for faces, and unless he was wearing a name tag that said "Mike Rotundo," I wasn't going to risk embarrassing myself.

Peter King, who would over the years teach me that good reporters cannot be shy, went over to his table and spoke to him for about five minutes before returning.

"Nice guy," Peter said. "He was thrilled when I told him we were going to run pictures of his match in the magazine."

We paid our bill and were loading our suitcases into Peter's car when we saw Rotundo climbing into a beat-up 1968 Buick. He waved to us, started the car, and breathed a sigh of relief.

***

Mike Rotundo never has to worry about his car starting anymore. Porsches usually start on the first try. Mike Rotundo, quite obviously, has come a long way in four years.

The former Syracuse University collegiate champ has been successful every place he has wrestled. He made his pro debut in Germany, defeating veteran Wolfgang Saturski in 1981, made his North American debut with a victory over Louis Laurence in Mon-

(Continued on page 54)

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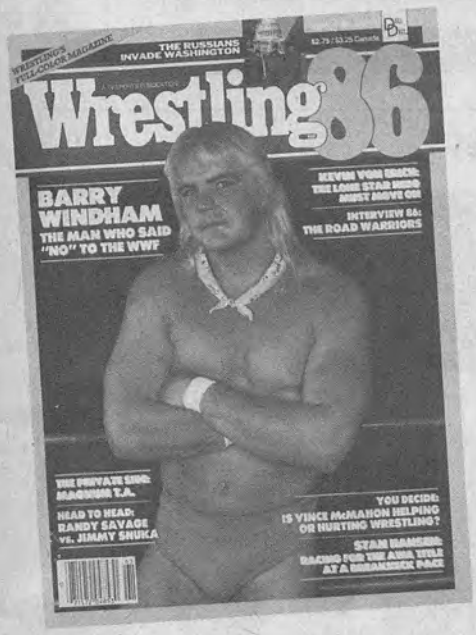
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PEEPS

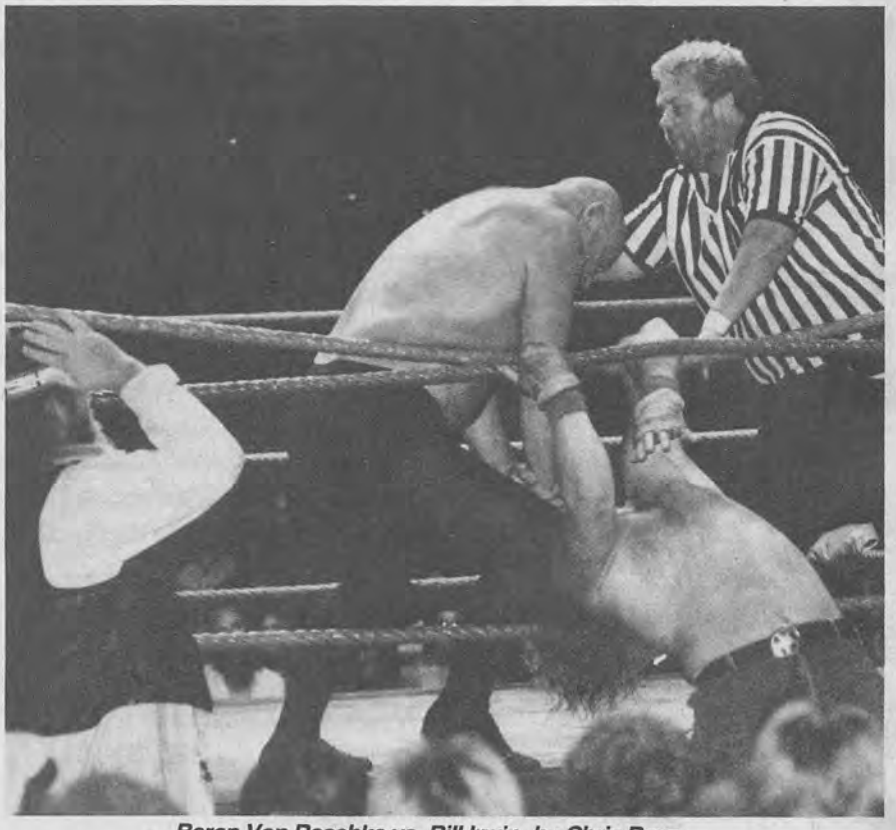
With CRAIG PETERS

THE LAST *PWI* T-SHIRT CONTEST

Back in the April 1985 issue of *PWI,* I instituted a fan photo contest in this column. Over the past 15 months, fans from all around the country—and even from Japan—have had their photos printed in *PWI*, and won free T-shirts as a result.

This month's issue brings the photo contest to an end with a fine entry from Chris Berg of Forest Lake, Minnesota. Chris' photo of Baron Von Raschke choking Wild Bill Irwin in the ropes was taken last September at the St. Paul Civic Center. To the left of the photo, you can see Bill's brother, Scott "Hog" Irwin, who interfered in the match seconds after this picture was taken and earned his brother a disqualification.

For his photographic effort, Chris wins a free *PWI* T-shirt. Good work, Chris!



Baron Von Raschke vs. Bill Irwin, by Chris Berg

As this contest comes to a close, I'd like to salute everyone who had their photos printed and made this contest a success: Mark Chesney of St. Paul, Minnesota; Mark Heine of New Orleans; Tonya Weber of Portland, Oregon; Peter Dinger of Waukegan, Illinois; Joey Sargent of Tarentum, Pennsylvania; Manuel Garcia of Shawnee, Kansas; John Ceselsky of Baltimore; Don Ford of Ownesboro, Kentucky; Lester Pinger of New York; Deborah Cloughen of Syosset, New York; Shoichi Saito of Kyoto, Japan; Chris Re of Gloucester, Massachusetts; and Stu Kaplan of Canton, Massachusetts.

Along with Chris this issue, that's 10 states (from New York to Oregon) and two countries that have been represented. Not a bad cross-section of wrestling fans, if I do say so. Good job, everyone!

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF JESSE VENTURA

If you're like me, you tune in to WWF wrestling more for the comments of color announcer Jesse Ventura than for the squash matches aired every week. Normally paired with the verbally oafish Gorilla Monsoon ("His eyes are literally bulging from their sockets," "The fans are literally hanging from the rafters," and literally so forth), Jesse hit the networks recently on the March 1 *Saturday Night's Main Event*. Paired with Vince McMahon, Jesse came out with many gems, both humorous and astute. Among the best:

- Responding to McMahon's comment about Bob Orton thumbing Mr. T during their boxing match: "I have a question for you, McMahon: What's the difference between a thumb in the eye and a *blatant* thumb in the eye?"
- Also in the Orton-Mr. T match, responding to McMahon's analysis of boxing: "McMahon, do you think just because you're Irish, you know everything there is about this?"
- During Magnificent Muraco's match against Hulk Hogan, Muraco was raking Hulk's back with his fingers. Jesse: "Wow! Muraco's gonna take that suntan right off his body." Seconds later, Hulk raked Muraco. Jesse: "Look at that! Blatant scratching on the part of Hulk Hogan." McMahon: "Wait, we saw it earlier on, didn't we, the other way?" Jesse: "Muraco had his nails cut."
- Jesse, again during the Hogan-Muraco match: "You can hear the crowd chanting, 'Hogan, Hogan,' but that don't matter to Muraco. He's like the old Oakland Raiders, he loves to be the visiting team."
- And once more during Hogan-Muraco, when McMahon pointed out Muraco's rip to Hulk's eye with the laces of his boot. Vince: "You saw it, Jesse." Jesse: "I seen it. I love it."

PROPAGANDA PROPAGATION

Prior to a recent card of wrestling in Philadelphia, I snapped the photo you see here: Ivan and Nikita Koloff perusing a volume entitled *The Propaganda Handbook*. I asked Ivan about the book.

"You know, I'll bet you are just like all Americans," Ivan said, "quick to judge Russian like myself. You think we are learning propaganda techniques for our own use, don't you? Well you know something, Craig Peters? I will tell you something."

Ivan thumbed through the first few pages until he found the copyright information at the bottom of one of the first pages.

"Look here," Ivan said, thrusting the book in front of my face. "This is American book, not Russian. Written by American, for Americans."

I looked at the copyright date: 1954. The height of the McCarthy anti-Communist witch hunt. I knew right away that the book was probably more of a reactionary statement of the times than a reasoned scholarly study. Nevertheless, the Koloffs seemed to be devouring every word.

Nikita & Ivan Koloff

"This is amazing study of American stupidity and paranoia of conspiracy," Ivan said. "I am using this book as example to Nikita of American beliefs and misconceptions of Russian attitudes and way of life. This is yet one more example of American stupidity. Nikita must understand these things. He is my student, and this is his most recent textbook for study of Americans. Interesting book, no, Nikita?"

Nikita looked at his uncle and shook his head in disbelief. "Americans crazy people," he growled, "very crazy people. Crazy inferior people."

I left the Koloffs' dressing room, allowing Ivan to continue his teachings. That Ivan is using McCarthyism as an example of American beliefs for Nikita says a lot about Nikita's view of America. And not much for their worth. □

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February 1979/Stories include: Ladd, Flair, Idol, Heenan.

DECEMBER 1985

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September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

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May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

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November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/Stories include: 20th Anniversary, 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen

March 1986/Stories include: Lance Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen vs. Martel

April 1986/Stories include: Kevin Von Erich, Rude, Lex Lugar, Hogan, Magnum TA.

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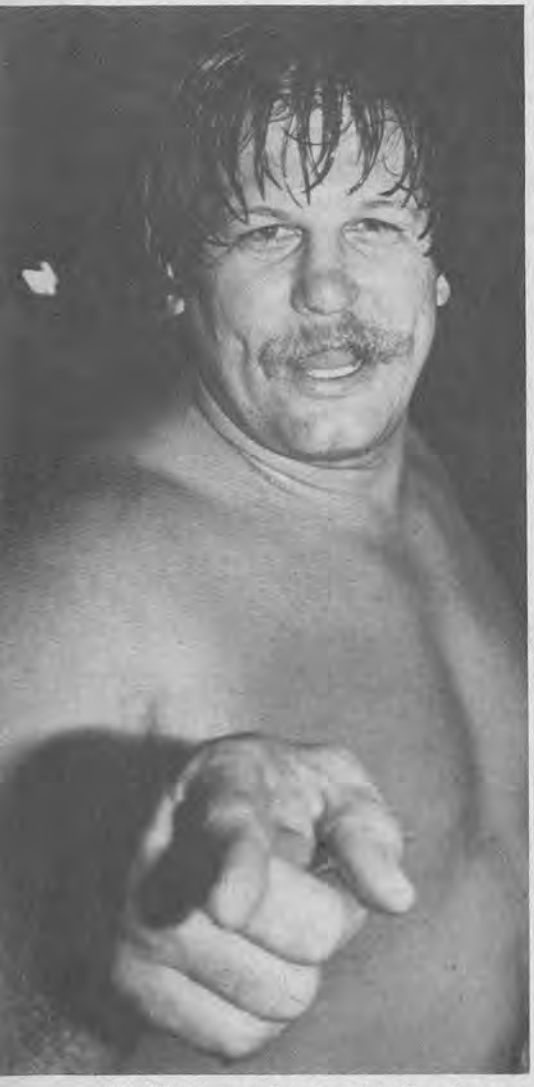
ON ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER

(This is the first of a two part interview Liz Hunter conducted with Stan Hansen at his home in Borger, Texas.)

I WOULDN'T EXACTLY call this a glamour assignment. Pete King hands me a plane ticket to Dallas with six days between arrival and departure. Figuring it was his impish way of saying "Here, Liz, after you're done take a couple days off and cool down," I said to him: "I'll bring you back a hat from Cozumel, honey."



It's difficult enough to interview Stan Hansen in a dressing room; Liz Hunter was assigned to interview him at home in Borger, Texas!

What he *did* say was, "When you get to the airport, you'll be met by Hernando Jones, one of our South American correspondents. He'll fly you into Borger. You have a week's reservation at a Quality Inn there. What I want from you is an in-depth at home interview with Stan Hansen."

I shot Peter an eyeful of woman's scorn. Liz Hunter, alone, rubbing knees with the burros in some Okie shanty town trying to interview the most homicidal madman in wrestling? No way. But Peter silenced me before I could protest. "If you get the story, there'll be something extra in your paycheck next month," he said.

"Yeah, my workman's compensation after Hansen assaults me," I said.

"This is a tremendous opportunity, Liz. No one has ever interviewed Hansen at home before. This could be the scoop of the century. Now, go get yourself something to wear—it was 102 degrees in Borger yesterday—and get the right attitude. And don't call me honey."

Besides being a wrestling correspondent, Hernando Jones owns a Grasiento Bean distributorship in Mexico City. "Hansen loves Grasiento Beans," Jones confided in me as we zipped up the Gulf Coast in his twin-engine Cessna. "It's the only bean he uses in his chili."

I filed the information away for later reference. I also had to tell macho flyboy Jones to take a powder when he tried to tag along with me. "This is my assignment, Hernando. I can't be responsible for your safety and mine. You'll only be a distraction."

I felt bad—the kid had wanted his whole life to meet Hansen, and we both knew this was as close as he'd ever get. "I'll get you an autograph," I cried to his cab as it pulled away. I shivered to myself, wondering if I'd even get to Hansen's front door.

Borger, Texas, lies about 50 miles south of Oklahoma and 350 miles from the Mexican border. It's an oppressive, stifling town, composed of dust and sun and air crying for moisture, situated as it is hundreds and hundreds of miles from the nearest body of water. I checked into my hotel room to escape the heat—which by 10 a.m. had already climbed to 85 degrees—and planned my assault.

Two hours later I stood outside the sprawling 35-acre Hansen ranch staring at a crude, handpainted sign with the ominous declaration *"Get Lost Now."* In my handbag I had a 35 mm Nikon, a tape recorder, 20 lollipops, a can of mace, and a two-quart can of Grasiento's Gourmet Beans.

The mace I purchased in town after I explained to the hotel bell captain the reason for my stay in Borger. His face turned paste white. He had to sit down. "Don't

(Continued on page 55)

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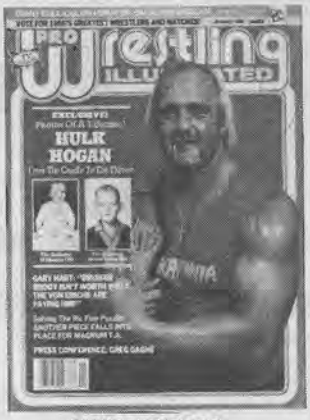

JANUARY 1986

July 1980/COLOR STARSHOT: The Sheik. Cover story: Bruno Sammartino. PLUS: Wrestling II, Race, Ladd, Albano.

August 1980/COLOR STARSHOT: Koloff and Smirnoff. Cover story: Bruno vs. Zbyszko. PLUS: Idol, Von Erichs, Rhodes, Hogan.

June 1982/COLOR POSTER: Nick Bockwinkel. Cover story: Adonis & Ventura. PLUS: Snuka, Patera, Flair.

August 1982/COLOR POSTER: Dino Bravo. Cover story: Steamboat & Rich. PLUS: Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie.

September 1982/COLOR POSTER: Blackjack Mulligan Jr. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Piper, Snuka, Von Erich, Martel, AWA Sheiks.

October 1982/COLOR POSTER: Jerry Lawler. Cover story: Ric Flair. PLUS: Rhodes, Graham, Race, Funk Jr.

December 1982/COLOR POSTER: Rick Martel. Cover story: Hulk Hogan. PLUS: Von Erich, Orndorff, Albano.

January 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ken Patera. Cover story: Rick Steamboat. PLUS: Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

February 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ivan Putski. Cover story: Rhodes vs. Garvin. PLUS: Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

April 1983/COLOR POSTER: Superstar Graham. Cover story: Mil Mascaras. PLUS: Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

June 1983/COLOR POSTER: Cowboy Bob Orton. Cover story: Rick Martel. PLUS: Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

July 1983/COLOR POSTER: Ivan Koloff. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Patera, Von Erich, Snuka, Geigel.

August 1983/COLOR POSTER: Larry Zbyszko. Cover story: Roddy Piper. PLUS: Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

October 1983/COLOR POSTER: Junkyard Dog. Cover story: Tommy Rich. PLUS: Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

November 1983/COLOR POSTER: Roddy Piper. Cover story: Harley Race. PLUS: Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

December 1983/COLOR POSTER: Wahoo McDaniel. Cover story: Dusty Rhodes. PLUS: Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

FEBRUARY 1986

January 1984/COLOR POSTER: Harley Race. Cover story: Rick Martel. PLUS: Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR POSTER: Jim Garvin & Sunshine. Cover story: Greg Valentine. PLUS: Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

April 1984/COLOR POSTER: Rocky Johnson. Cover story: Ric Flair. PLUS: Hogan, Andre, Rich, Bundy.

May 1984/COLOR POSTER: Hacksaw Butch Reed. Cover story: Hulk Hogan. PLUS: Road Warriors, Fabulous Ones, Flair, Rotundo.

June 1984/COLOR POSTER: Dick Slater. Cover story: Ted DiBiase. PLUS: Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, One Man Gang, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR POSTER: Paul Ellering. Cover story: Jimmy Valiant. PLUS: JYD, Fabulous Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR POSTER: Stan Hansen. Cover story: Jerry Lawler. PLUS: Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

September 1984/COLOR POSTER: Hulk Hogan. Cover story: The Road Warriors. SPECIAL FIFTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE—A Look Back At Wrestling In The *PWI* Years.

October 1984/COLOR POSTER: Billy Jack. Cover story: Kerry Von Erich. PLUS: Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR POSTER: Rick Martel. Cover story: Sgt. Slaughter. PLUS: Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

December 1984/COLOR POSTER: Kerry Von Erich. Cover story: Barry Windham. PLUS: Rich, Martel, McDaniel, WWF-NWA TV war.

January 1985/COLOR POSTER: Tito Santana. Cover story: Road Warriors. PLUS: Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR POSTER: Magnum T.A. Cover story: Rick Martel. PLUS: Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

March 1985/SPECIAL YEAR-END AWARDS ISSUE! FOUR PAGE COLOR SECTION: Billy Jack, Roddy Piper, Ric Flair vs. Kerry Von Erich; PLUS: 1984—The Year In Review.

April 1985/COLOR POSTER: Ronnie Garvin. Cover story: Jimmy Snuka. PLUS: Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

May 1985/COLOR POSTER: Road Warriors. SPECIAL TAG TEAM ISSUE! Cover story: Fabulous Ones & Rock 'n' Roll Express. PLUS: Windham & Rotundo, Von Erich & Billy Haynes, *PWI* Rates Top 15 teams.

June 1985/COLOR POSTER: Barry Windham. Cover story: Dusty Rhodes. PLUS: Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, Magnum T.A.

July 1985/COLOR POSTER: Sgt. Slaughter. Cover story: Hogan vs. Piper. PLUS: Road Warriors, One Man Gang, Magnum T.A., Martel.

August 1985/COLOR POSTER: Rock 'n' Roll Express. Cover story: Von Erichs. PLUS: Slaughter, Hogan, NWA scouting reports.

September 1985/COLOR POSTER: Junkyard Dog. Cover story: Magnum T.A. PLUS: Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR POSTER: Chris Adams. Cover story: Steamboat. PLUS: Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR POSTER: Randy Savage. Cover story: Ric Flair. PLUS: Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR POSTER: Jesse Ventura. Cover story: Great American Bash. PLUS: Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR POSTER: Hacksaw Duggan. Cover story: Hulk Hogan. PLUS: Magnum T.A., Brody, Gagne.

February 1986/COLOR POSTER: Nikita Koloff. Cover story: Mike Von Erich, The Road Warriors. PLUS: Tito Santana, Terry Taylor, Barbarian, Harley Race.

April 1986/COLOR POSTER: Ric Flair. Cover story: Wendi Richter. PLUS: Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR POSTER: Rick Steamboat. Cover story: Road Warriors. PLUS: Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

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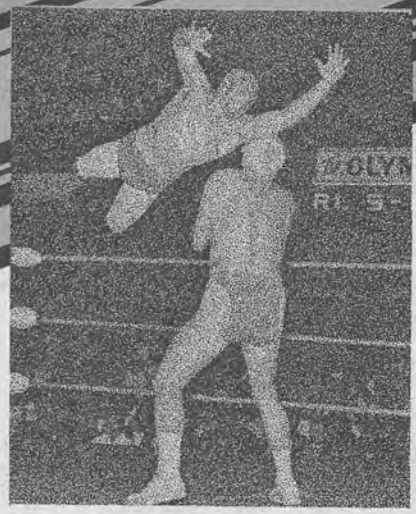
BY EDDIE ELLNER

off the Top Rope



If you wish to contribute to Ellner's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571

[Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

AN ODE TO Dan Shocket is appropriate since this magazine will hit the stands two weeks before the first anniversary of his death. Danny would loathe such sentimentality, but he is in no real position to protest. It's my column now, and if I want to devote it to his memory I will. So it is said, so it be done. Following is a column of Danny's greatest hits; his brutal wit cutting the pages like a laser. Sit back and enjoy.

Dan Shocket was the originator of this column and will never be duplicated. I only hope to maintain the great tradition he started.

Dear Dan,

I'm surprised that you think my favorite wrestler, Ted DiBiase, isn't a very good wrestler. Well, I just for once would like to see you get in the ring with him.

If I ever see you coming down the street, I'll punch you out.

JAMES WATKINS
Augusta, KA

Dear Jimbo,

I'll try to make this simple enough for you to understand. Whether DiBiase can beat me in a wrestling match is not the point. He has to be able to beat other professional wrestlers. I am a writer. Would it make sense to challenge Ted to come to my office and try to write an intelligent sentence? Against professional wrestlers, DiBiase is a disgrace. As for your threat about punching me, if I'm ever stuck in Augusta, Kansas, I figure getting beaten will be typical of the luck that got me to that jerkwater town.

Shocket:

You "think" you're so cool. You put down all good wrestlers. If you had another brain, you'd be lonely.

Question: How would you get everyone on the East Coast with an I.Q. under 30 into an arena?

Answer: Have Roddy Piper wrestle Dan Shocket.

You probably get along with Piper real good. As my friend would say, you wouldn't know class if you were surrounded by it. Tommy Rich is proof.

MARCIA POTVIN
Traverse City, MI

Potvin:

Question: What kind of person would be so devoid of intelligence and imagination that she must go to a friend because she can't think of her own, unfunny jokes?

Answer: See above letter.

Dear Diddlebrain Dan:

You call yourself a journalist? All you do is make fun of wrestlers. Only an uneducated person would call Tommy Rich, Michael Hayes, or Bob Backlund such names. They happen to be favorites of mine, and I sure don't care what you think!

Nobody wants to hear your sickening, rabid blatherings, so go back to the smelly swamp you came from, you rotten jerk!

RON FISHER
Jackson, NJ

Dear Ridiculous Ron:

It is always dangerous for someone from New Jersey to call someone else's home a smelly swamp. But here's something to think about while you're watching the sun set over the toxic waste dump: If you don't care what I think, why did you bother writing to tell me so?

(Continued on page 56)

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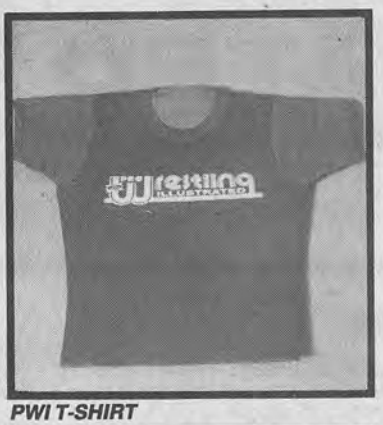

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For period ended March 7, 1986

PWI's TOP 10

Randy Savage

SINGLES

1. **RIC FLAIR**
   NWA World champion
   243, Minneapolis, MN
2. **HULK HOGAN**
   WWF World champion
   302, Venice Beach, CA
3. **STAN HANSEN**
   AWA World champion
   322, Borger, TX
4. **MAGNUM T.A.**
   U.S. champion
   245, Chesapeake, VA
5. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   Intercontinental champion
   245, Sarasota, FL
6. **KERRY VON ERICH**
   No. 1 contender: World Class title
   260, Denton, TX
7. **DUSTY RHODES**
   No 1 contender: National title
   302, Austin, TX
8. **NIKITA KOLOFF**
   No. 4 contender: NWA title
   275, Moscow, Russia
9. **RICK RUDE**
   World Class champion
   246, Robbinsdale, MN
10. **BRUISER BRODY**
    No. 4 contender: AWA title
    284, Albuquerque, NM

TAG TEAMS

1. **THE ROAD WARRIORS**
   No. 1 contenders to AWA and NWA World tag team titles
   Combined weight: 567 pounds
2. **DENNIS CONDREY & BOBBY EATON**
   NWA World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 472 pounds
3. **GREG VALENTINE & BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
   WWF World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 511 pounds
4. **SCOTT HALL & CURT HENNIG**
   AWA World tag team champions
   Combined weight: 525 pounds
5. **STEVE WILLIAMS & TED DiBIASE**
   Mid-South tag team champions
   Combined weight: 542 pounds
6. **DYNAMITE KID & DAVEY BOY SMITH**
   No. 1 contenders to WWF tag team title
   Combined weight: 461 pounds
7. **RICK MORTON & ROBERT GIBSON**
   No. 2 contenders to NWA tag team title
   Combined weight: 453 pounds
8. **IVAN & NIKITA KOLOFF**
   No. 3 contenders to NWA tag team title
   Combined weight: 524 pounds
9. **TOMMY ROGERS & BOBBY FULTON**
   Mid-Southern tag team champions
   Combined weight: 462 pounds
10. **STEVE KEIRN & STAN LANE**
    No. 1 contenders to vacant U.S. tag team title
    Combined weight: 499 pounds

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1. **MAGNUM T.A.** *245, Chesapeake, VA*
2. **TULLY BLANCHARD** *235, San Antonio, TX*
3. **RONNIE GARVIN** *231, Montreal, Quebec*
4. **NIKITA KOLOFF** *275, Moscow, Russia*
5. **DUSTY RHODES** *302, Austin, TX*
6. **WAHOO McDANIEL** *260, Midland, TX*
7. **DICK SLATER** *235, Tampa, FL*
8. **LEX LUGAR** *280, Chicago, IL*
9. **BARRY WINDHAM** *236, Sweetwater, TX*
10. **BILLY JACK HAYNES** *245, Portland, OR*

AWA

World Champion:
STAN HANSEN
322, Borger, TX

1. **SGT. SLAUGHTER** *310, Parris Island, SC*
2. **RICK MARTEL** *236, Quebec City, Quebec*
3. **NICK BOCKWINKEL** *245, Beverly Hills, CA*
4. **BRUISER BRODY** *284, Albuquerque, NM*
5. **SCOTT HALL** *290, Minneapolis, MN*
6. **LARRY ZBYSZKO** *248, Pittsburgh, PA*
7. **NORD THE BARBARIAN** *316, parts unknown*
8. **BORIS ZUKHOV** *254, Leningrad, Russia*
9. **GREG GAGNE** *220, Robbinsdale, MN*
10. **MARTY JANNETTY** *224, Columbus, GA*

WWF

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
302, Venice Beach, CA

1. **RANDY SAVAGE** *245, Sarasota, FL*
2. **JUNKYARD DOG** *260, New Orleans, LA*
3. **RICK STEAMBOAT** *238, Honolulu, HI*
4. **KING KONG BUNDY** *446, Atlantic City, NJ*
5. **TITO SANTANA** *245, Mission, TX*
6. **PAUL ORNDORFF** *253, Brandon, FL*
7. **MAGNIFICENT MURACO** *274, Sunset Beach, HA*
8. **TERRY FUNK** *247, Amarillo, TX*
9. **JESSE VENTURA** *270, Muscle Beach, CA*
10. **ADRIAN ADONIS** *303, New York, NY*

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

1. **MAGNUM T.A.** *245, Chesapeake, VA*
2. **TULLY BLANCHARD** *235, San Antonio, TX*
3. **DUSTY RHODES** *302, Austin, TX*
4. **RONNIE GARVIN** *231, Montreal, Quebec*
5. **NIKITA KOLOFF** *275, Moscow, Russia*
6. **JIM GARVIN** *235, Tampa, FL*
7. **ARN ANDERSON** *239, Minneapolis, MN*
8. **SAM HOUSTON** *218, Waco, TX*
9. **KONGA THE BARBARIAN** *265, Chicago, IL*
10. **BARON VON RASCHKE** *271, East Germany*

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD CLASS

1—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
2—**THE GRAPPLER**
241, parts unknown
3—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
4—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
5—**BRUISER BRODY**
284, Albuquerque, NM
6—**LANCE VON ERICH**
260, Dallas, TX
7—**THE MISSING LINK**
273, parts unknown
8—**BRIAN ADIDAS**
238, Denton, TX
9—**ICEMAN PARSONS**
242, St. Louis, MO
10—**STEVE REGAL**
238, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

MID-SOUTH

1—**DICK SLATER**
235, Tampa, FL
2—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
3—**DICK MURDOCH**
270, Waxahachie, TX
4—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
5—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Tulsa, OK
6—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NB
7—**MASKED SUPERSTAR**
282, parts unknown
8—**BUZZ SAWYER**
240, St. Petersburg, FL
9—**TARRAS BULBA**
237, Outer Mongolia
10—**BRETT SAWYER**
242, St. Petersburg, FL

FLORIDA

1—**LEX LUGAR**
280, Chicago, IL
2—**THE CUBAN ASSASSIN**
236, Cuba
3—**JESSE BARR**
243, Portland, OR
4—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
5—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
239, Boston, MA
6—**BLACKJACK MULLIGAN**
310, Sweetwater, TX
7—**KENDALL WINDHAM**
220, Sweetwater, TX
8—**MAHA SINGH**
273, Tampa, FL
9—**TYREE PRIDE**
231, Haiti
10—**MIKE GRAHAM**
229, Tampa, FL

MID-SOUTHERN

1—**BILL DUNDEE**
214, Melbourne, Australia
2—**RICK CASEY**
239, San Antonio, TX
3—**DIRTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
4—**BUDDY LANDELL**
236, Los Angeles, CA
5—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
6—**DUTCH MANTEL**
242, Bucksnorth, TN
7—**PHIL HICKERSON**
257, Jackson, TN
8—**LARRY HAMILTON**
232, Tampa, FL
9—**TOJO YAMAMOTO**
230, Tokyo, Japan
10—**BILLY TRAVIS**
225, Lexington, KY

CONTINENTAL

1—**EXOTIC ADRIAN STREET**
227, South Wales
2—**ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN
3—**NORVELL AUSTIN**
239, Pensacola, FL
4—**BRAD ARMSTRONG**
226, Marietta, GA
5—**JERRY STUBBS**
235, Pensacola, FL
6—**TIM HORNER**
235, Morristown, TN
7—**TOMMY RICH**
232, Hendersonville, TN
8—**JIMMY GOLDEN**
234, Montgomery, AL
9—**JOHNNY RICH**
238, Hendersonville, TN
10—**ROBERTO SOTO**
231, San Juan, Puerto Rico

NORTHWEST

1—**TOM ZENK**
237, Robbinsdale, MN
2—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL
3—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
245, Portland
4—**BOBBY JAGGERS**
265, Dunlap, KS
5—**MIKE MILLER**
260, Memphis, TN
6—**BRADY BOONE**
236, Charlotte, NC
7—**SCOTT DORING**
255, Minneapolis, MN
8—**THE ASSASSIN**
249, parts unknown
9—**MOONDOG MORETTI**
245, Boise, ID
10—**COCOA SAMOA**
239, Samoa

MOST POPULAR

1—**HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
2—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
3—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
4—**PAUL ORNDORFF**
253, Brandon, FL
5—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
6—**JUNKYARD DOG**
260, New Orleans, LA
7—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
8—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
9—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
10—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL

MOST HATED

1—**KING KONG BUNDY**
446, Atlantic City, NJ
2—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
3—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
4—**STAN HANSEN**
322, Borger, TX
5—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
6—**RICK RUDE**
246, Robbinsdale, MN
7—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
276, Moscow, Russia
8—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
9—**DICK SLATER**
235, Tampa, FL
10—**ADRIAN ADONIS**
303, New York, NY

PWI's Top 10 is based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board.

NWA, AWA, and WWF ratings, in addition to the regional ratings from around the country, are based on the official current position of challengers to the top title in each category. (Certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings). Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and mail that comes to our offices.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

The World Class title situation: You may already have read the story on page 39 about the World Class area pulling out of the NWA. If not, you should; the story explains the ramifications of a development that affects the entire wrestling world.

What we'd like to discuss here is the immediate effect this development will have on the ratings, and the historical precedents for such a decision.

Rick Rude

The most obvious immediate effect is the designation of **Rick Rude's** title in our ratings. If you refer to last issue's ratings, you'll see that Rude's title in the Top 10 is called the "World Class American Championship." Since the World Class area upgraded that belt to what they claim is world title status (and we'll get to that two paragraphs from now), we will now denote Rude's title as simply the "World Class Championship."

As far as the World Class ratings themselves are concerned, things will remain pretty much the same. Instead of the World Class American champion occupying the number one spot, now the World Class champion will be rated number one. The World Class Texas title will remain in the number two position, and the three through 10 positions filled by the top area competitors.

Now—the controversial topic of world championship status. The situation, in a nutshell, is this: The World Class area has designated their World Class American champion to be the World Class Wrestling Association World champion. The dilemma of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* becomes: Do we recognize this title as the fourth world championship?

Right now, the answer is no. The editorial staff has discussed this question thoroughly, and we feel that it is not appropriate to automatically elevate the World Class title to the level of a world championship.

This is not a unique situation. Through history, world champions have been declared by various wrestling associations and have not been recognized by fans and professional observers of the sport as world titlists. Instead, the fans and the media waited to see if those titles would stand the test of time and *earn* world championship status. Most haven't. **Mil Mascaras'** International Wrestling Association title (circa 1975) is one example; **Randy Savage's** International Championship Wrestling title (circa 1979) is another.

Interestingly enough, this issue was examined in the very first "Ratings Analysis" column, printed in the September 1983 edition of our sister publication *The Wrestler.* At the time, **Adrian Adonis** was claiming to be the "undisputed world heavyweight champion" as the result of winning a tournament sponsored by Southwest Championship Wrestling.

Most relevant to the question of the World Class Championship is the following paragraph from that first column:

Will we recognize this new championship to a greater degree in the future? That depends. Will Adonis, or the man who eventually dethrones Adonis, defend the belt against true world-class opposition around the world? Will he be willing to defend against rulebreakers and scientific wrestlers? Will he bring a sense of dignity and respect to the title that will virtually demand that the championship be recognized as important?

Hulk Hogan

At the time those words were written, we only recognized the NWA and AWA titles as world championships. In the August 1985 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* "Ratings Analysis" invoked that very first column and opened up the question of whether the WWF title should be granted world title status. The discussion took place in "Ratings Analysis" for several months. And in the November 1985 edition of *PWI,* **Hulk Hogan's** WWF title was referred to as the "WWF World Championship" for the very first time.

The point is this: For now, Rude's World Class title will be viewed as certainly one of the most important titles in the sport, but it will not be regarded as a *world* title. Which is not to say that world title status may not be granted at some time in the future. It all depends on where and how the World Class champion defends the title, and how the wrestling world at large reacts to the actions of the World Class area in general, and the World Class champion in particular.

As the old saying goes: "Only time will tell." We suppose it will.

The address for mail: We're anxiously awaiting your comments on this issue's story about World Class seceding from the NWA, and on this edition of "Ratings Analysis." Send all those cards and letters to: "Ratings Analysis" c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48; Rockville Center, NY 11571. □

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A Psychological Profile

IS JESSE VENTURA JEALOUS OF THE HILLBILLIES?

Ventura tries to locate Uncle Elmer's throat beneath his beard (above). Jesse has more luck with his foot (below). Ventura, backed by Brutus Beefcake and Greg Valentine, doubles over Hillbilly Jim (opposite page).

LOOKING LIKE A grotesque pink Buddha, Adorable Adrian Adonis lumbered through the ropes into the ring, his flesh quivering like a vat of strawberry Jell-O. Adonis preened and coiffed his bleached locks, snubbing his nose with developed aristocracy. From their rickety seats, the crowd responded with poisoned hoots and hollers. One innovative member of the screaming throng hoisted a gigantic, moldy pair of cups—unbelievably it was a bra, although it more closely resembled a hammock than anything remotely feminine.

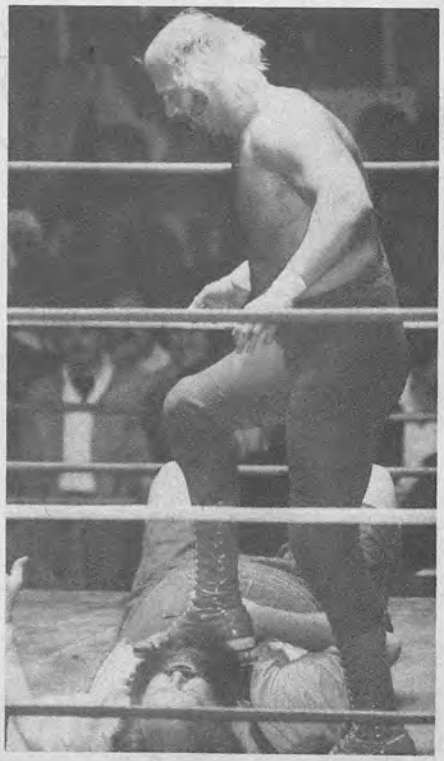
"Whoa! Will you look at that thing, Jesse," cried Vince McMahon, with whom Ventura was announcing the match. "That's a big one, all right. It must be a size 60!"

Jesse Ventura sunk in his announcer's seat, his massive shoulders shrinking into his red and black sequined jacket.

"That's a subject you should know lots about, *Mc*Mahon," he retorted, but lacking in any of the famous Venturian bite.

For Jesse Ventura, the times they are a changin'—for the worse.

The match progressed, and Ventura's analysis became its stylish blend of wit and disdain in support of his old friend Adonis, while McMahon's patter turned almost patronizing. Ventura has felt the heat ever since his best friend publicly disclosed his homosexuality months ago, although the disclosure isn't the sole source of Ventura's troubles. The psychological and spiritual malaise that's infected the colorful wrestler-announcer can be traced to an unlikely source, to a group of men that share none of Ventura's discriminating



Photos by David Fitzgerald

The fast lane is catching up with Jesse Ventura. In this special feature, a world famous psychologist examines Ventura's crumbling world and prescribes the antidote that will cure Jesse's woes: Kill the Hillbillies

tastes and sophistication.

Jesse Ventura is jealous of Jim, Elmer, and Luke—the wrestling Hillbillies. The possum-eating, cheesey-toed, grumble-tongued Mountain Boys have inspired in Ventura a hate and jealousy that he cannot conceal. While Ventura enjoys the accruements of his position—the fat paycheck, easy notoriety, carte blanche and the nation's most chic clubs and parties—he realizes that with no amount of fame and money can he obtain the companionship and familial camaraderie that the Hillbillies, for all their slovenly habits, possess for nothing.

There's a casualness about Jesse Ventura that suggests if not indifference, then a detached aloofness. But the cool exterior that Ventura projects behind his fashion frames can no longer conceal the burden of loneliness that his eyes betray. Jesse Ventura is one lonely Body.

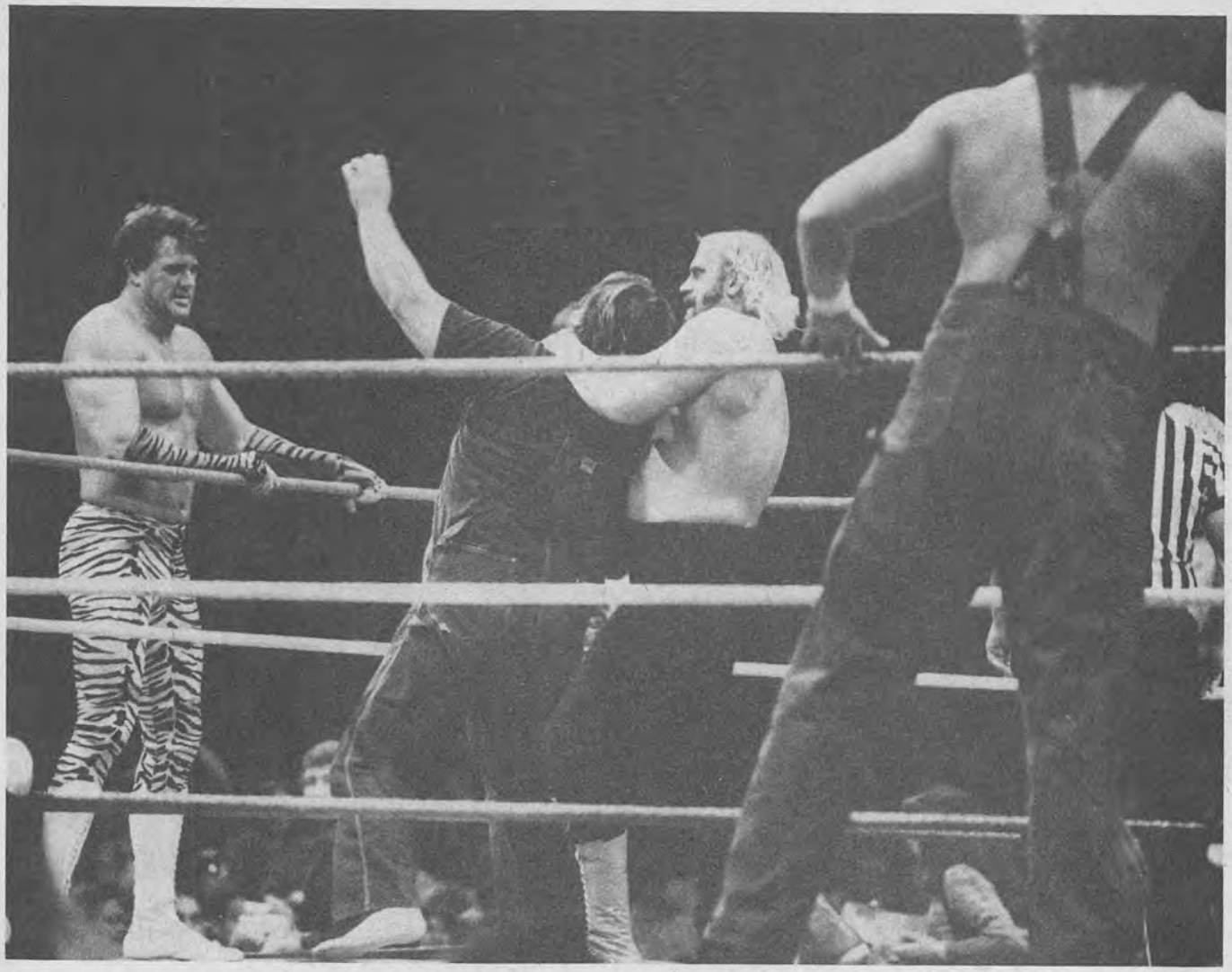
Dr. Milton Crenshaw, director of psychology of the Mandelbaum Clinic calls Ventura a classic sufferer of the Star Syndrome, an affliction that hospitalizes over 200 celebrities a year with symptoms including massive depression, catatonia, and suicidal paranoia.

"Externally," Dr. Crenshaw said, "Ventura appears in charge of his faculties. His public image in the ring and in the announcer's booth remains as truculent, aggressive, and imposing as ever. His confidence is unwavering. Yet if you watch him closely out of the ring—at parties, on interviews from the other side of the mike, he appears shaken and ill at ease.

"Stars such as Jesse are never certain of who their friends really are. They are besieged by doubts about their self-worth, constantly asking themselves, 'Are people talking to me because they like me or because I'm rich and famous?' The friends they have they cling to like little children, which is why Ventura was so shaken by Adonis' change. Adrian was one of the last people Ventura could trust.

"Stars simultaneously resent and envy those people—the average Joes—who are not smitten with the pressures of fame. They yearn for the simple, uncomplicated lives normal people lead but are unwilling to give up their fortune, fame and wealth.

"That is why Jesse harbors such undisguised hostility toward the Hillbillies. The Hillbillies live in both worlds, insulated from the glare and pressures of professional sports by their simple-mindedness. Ever since his vilification of Uncle Elmer during the Hillbilly's



Ventura muscles Cousin Luke to his partners' corner, where they will triple-team the helpless Hillbilly. After the match, Jesse and the WWF tag team champions would go their separate ways.

wedding, Ventura has relentlessly attacked the Hillbillies both in and out of the ring. He simply cannot come to terms with these men. He sees them hugging and rejoicing in victory, consoling and reassuring in defeat—always together, forever supportive of each other, while he, Jesse Ventura, idol of millions, sits alone."

Ventura's problems are compounded by his dual role as wrestler-announcer. While strictly a wrestler, Ventura could indulge the casual friendships that ring life encouraged. Becoming a broadcaster, though, has imposed natural constraints on Ventura's social life. If he is to be taken seriously as an announcer, he cannot risk his objectivity by palling around with wrestlers. Ventura, whose only weakness as an announcer is a tendency to favor rulebreakers, has forsaken most of his old buddies in an effort to appear more professional.

"When Jessie talks on the air about his friend Randy Savage, or the respect he has for King Kong Bundy, he is simply indulging in mental stroking," Dr. Crenshaw explains. "These men are his friends no longer. Jesse hopes to keep his image intact by these references, but out of the ring he doesn't socialize with them. As rulebreakers, most of his old friends are suspicious of Jesse's journalistic instincts and feel uncomfortable around him, afraid that what they say in confidence over a beer may wind up on the air later on.

"Most of them feel it's better not to take the risk. His other world, that of broadcasting, is compiled of men Ventura basically loathes and wouldn't dare socialize with him in 1,000 years. That leaves Jesse Ventura alone, with only his neuroses to keep him companion.

"Jesse's only chance is to vent the rage he has pent up, which he is doing in his current series of matches against the Hillbillies. You'll notice he is especially brutal against the mountain boys. This is exactly what he must do. Unless he is willing to give up his broadcasting career and rejoin the fraternity of wrestlers—and I don't believe he is so inclined—then it will take periodic beatings of the Hillbillies to ensure his mental health.

"Of course, there are real risks involved in such an undertaking. The Hillbillies are in constant action, always refining their ring skills. Since Ventura rarely wrestles and has little time to train, he runs the real risk of getting the tar beaten out of him.

"If the Hillbillies are able to defeat him, watch for Ventura to leave the sport entirely. He is not conditioned to cope with that scenario. His psyche is too delicate for him to admit defeat to the men he most hates."

In any instance, the coming months will be crucial for Jesse Ventura. □

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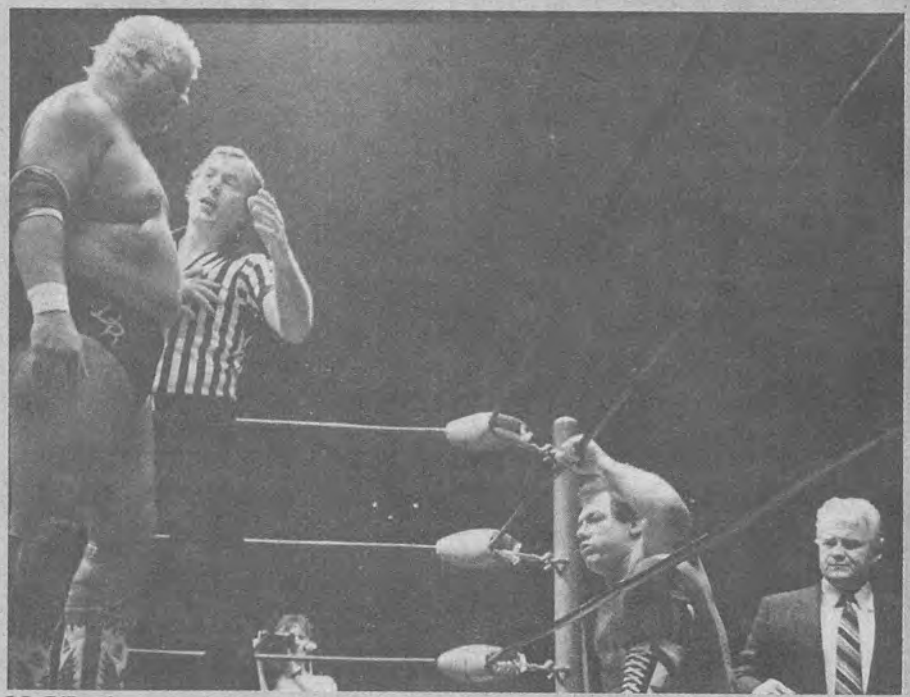
Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

PRESS CONFERENCE
DUSTY RHODES

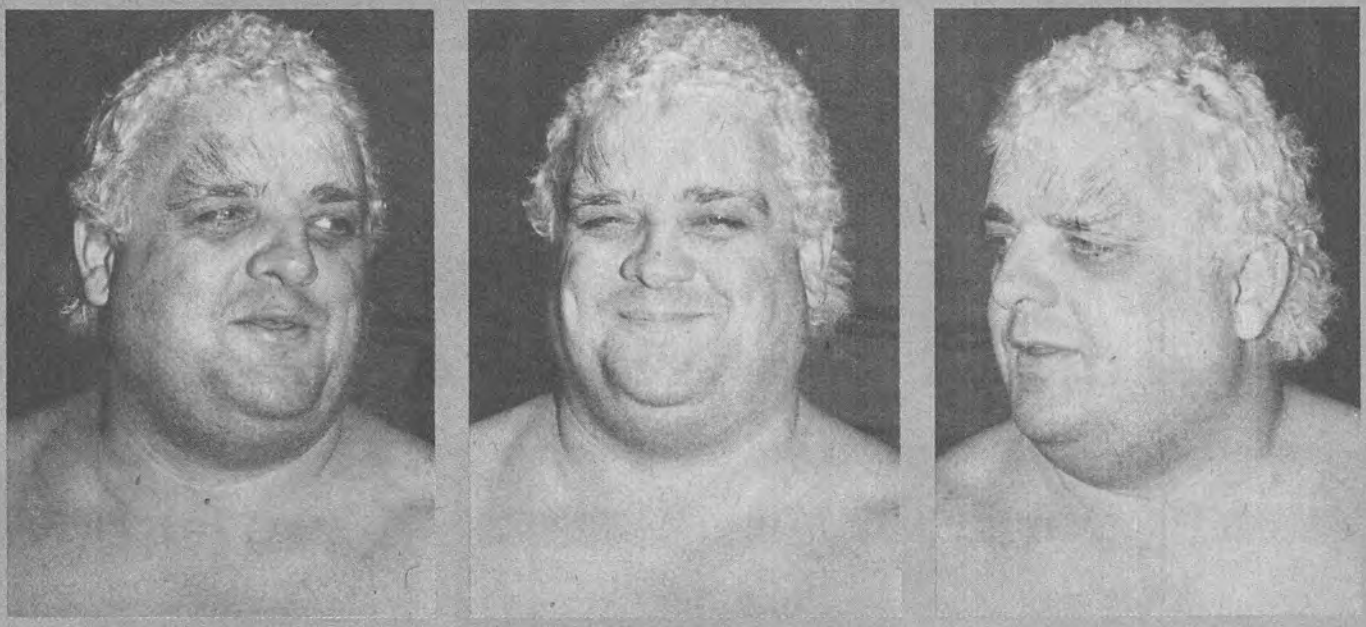
DUSTY RHODES' NICKNAME in the locker room is Timex, for obvious reasons. The career of the 6'1", 302-pound giant from Austin, Texas, has been one riddled with beatings, both received and distributed. Notable, even in the dangerous sport of professional wrestling, for spilling unprecedented amounts of blood, Rhodes survives to this day as one of the highest rated, most popular wrestlers in the world and a constant threat to capture the NWA World championship held by his longtime rival, Ric Flair.

Lately, though, Rhodes' problems have been more domestic than professional. Against the advice of his friends and colleagues, Rhodes befriended the notorious valet Baby Doll claiming her, in his inimitable dialect, as "his personal." Personal what? That is what Assistant Editor Eddie Ellner, Senior Editor Bill Apter, and Associate Editor Craig Peters attempt to discover in this press conference in a restaurant in Charlotte, North Carolina.



J.J. Dillon has a worried expression on his face as his charge, Tully Blanchard, is losing his match against Dusty Rhodes. Blanchard claims he and Dillon have a plan for Dusty's elimination from the sport. "The Dream" does not appear to be overly concerned.

The editors also question Dusty about the "Risky Business Boys," the new tag team he has formed with Ronnie Garvin, and whether the new team will topple the momentum that "America's Team"—the duo he and Magnum T.A. created—has generated. Characteristically, Dusty curbs no tongue when dispensing his opinions. The colorful (and off-colorful) quips that have made him a national treasure remain ever present.



"Poor Tully, I'm afraid, has become boring in his hurt and anger and self-pity. Mostly he's embarrassed since he knows Baby Doll has repudiated the entire Blanchard myth."

Ric Flair, on the receiving end of a Dusty Rhodes leglock, screams in agony. Though Dusty has a heavy schedule, he will always find time to wrestle for the NWA World title.

CRAIG PETERS: Is there a specific reason that led you into friendship with Baby Doll? And what exactly is the true nature of your relationship with her at the moment?

DUSTY RHODES: *(To the waitress).* Honey, honey, the boys and I are waitin' for our steaks. And see if you can make 'em extra thick, The Dream will make sure that you and the cook and the owner are well-compensated. Dusty is hungry today. Okay, Craiger, I'm sorry, to keep you waiting.

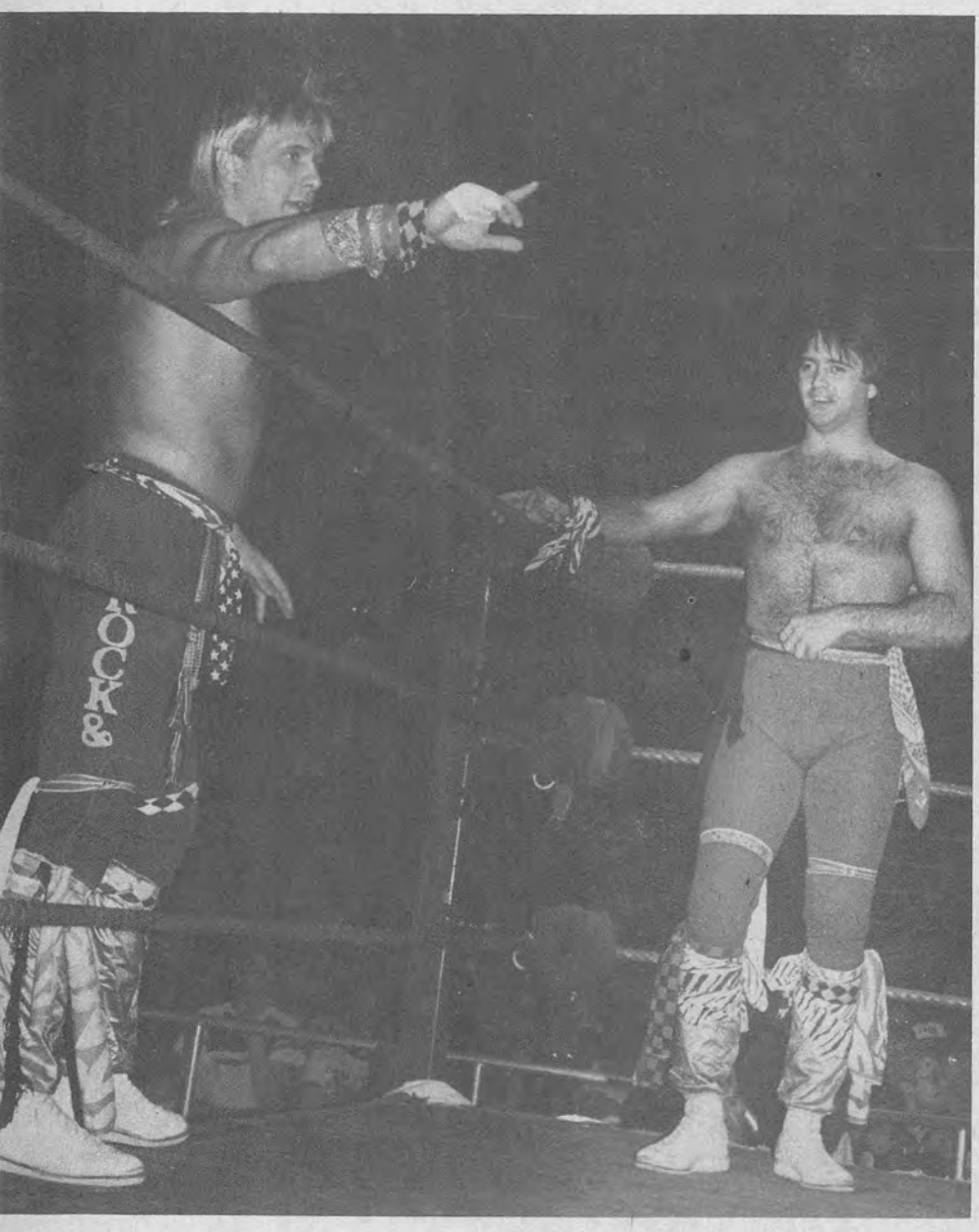
EDDIE ELLNER: Are you sure you remember the question, Dusty?

RHODES: The Dream never forgets nothin', pal. Why did I befriend Baby

(Continued on page 58)

THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS

NUMBER ONE— WITH A BULLET!



The Rock 'n' Rolls, as Rick Morton seems to be noting (left), are number one in the hearts of the fans. Gibson, signaling victory, will turn his body and spin Bobby Eaton to the mat (above).

In the record charts of *Billboard* magazine, a bullet next to an album's title indicates a sharp increase in sales over the previous week. In the hearts of the readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* magazine, The Rock 'n' Roll Express are number one—with a bullet indicating that they're getting more popular each day!

THE SAME SCENE is repeated five or six nights a weeks in arenas all across the country:

The lights are down, bathing the fans in anticipatory darkness. Electric excitement crackles through the air; one can almost detect a whiff of ozone. The rollicking guitars of Electric Light Orchestra suddenly burst forth through the arena sound system, and it seems as if everyone is singing along: "Come on, everybody, want to tell you 'bout the rock 'n' roll!"

A single white spotlight focuses on Rick Morton and Robert Gibson—The Rock 'n' Roll Express—as they dance and rock their way from the dressing room to the ring. Fans rush toward them, straining to touch their hair and their bandanas, desperately attempting to make contact with the two men that represent dynamic excellence in tag team wrestling.

Everybody cheers for them, but the girls in the crowd add shrill screams to those cheers. If their mothers are sitting next to them, they're probably screaming, too, in much the same way they did when four Britishers called The Beatles took to the stage over two decades earlier.

And when Morton and Gibson bound from the arena floor to the ring itself, the cheers seem to defy all sonic laws and grow louder still.

The fans are fulfilled. Living for the moment. The Rock 'n' Roll Express are here. Nothing else matters. There are no Road Warriors. No Ric Flair. No Sgt. Slaughter. No Hulk Hogan. Nobody else matters. This is it, brother, the only true rock 'n' wrestling connection: Morton and Gibson and the fans. Breathe in the excitement, relish it, cherish it. Because there's nothing else like it anywhere in wrestling.

***

Three arena guards had to be placed directly outside The Rock 'n' Roll Express' dressing room in order to control the fans who relentlessly sought entry to the inner sanctum. And when *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Assistant Editor Jeff Ryan flashed his press credentials to the guards and was allowed through the door, he was met with derisive hoots of jealousy and envy.

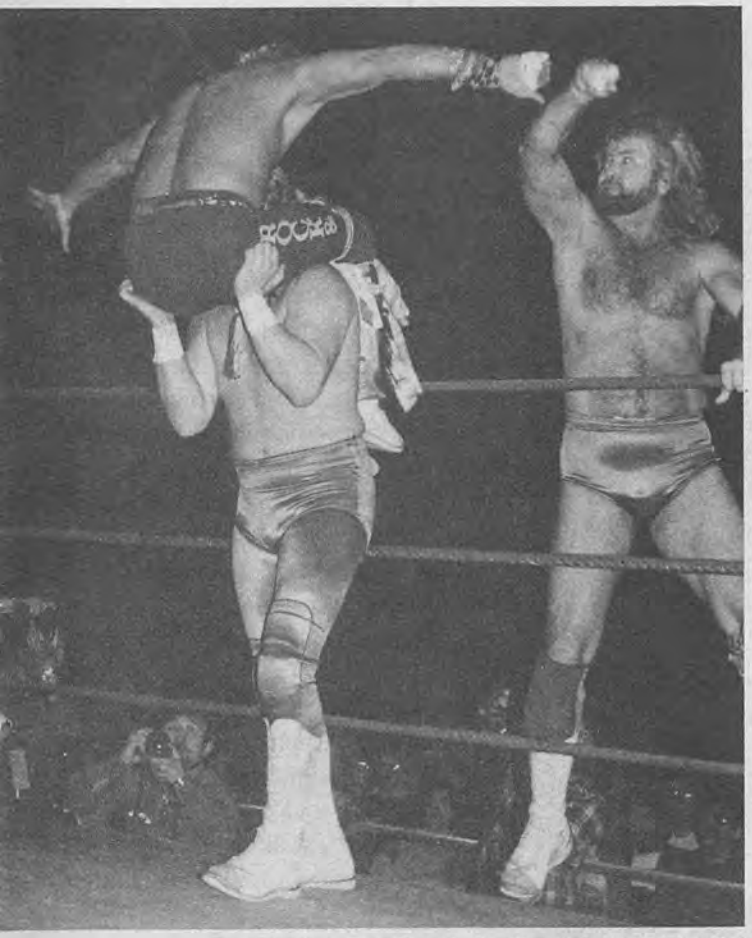
"I've never seen anything like this in my life," Ryan said as he removed his jacket and fished a pencil and paper out of his pocket. Morton and Gibson smiled at each other, enjoying the experience of seeing a reporter encounter for the first time something they deal with on a daily basis.

"Is it really always like this?" Ryan asked.

"Believe me, Jeff, it's gotten worse over the past couple of months," Morton said.

"Or better," Gibson added.

"Yeah, better! Depends on how you look at it!" Morton said. "See, there's good and bad with everything. The bad about this is that it



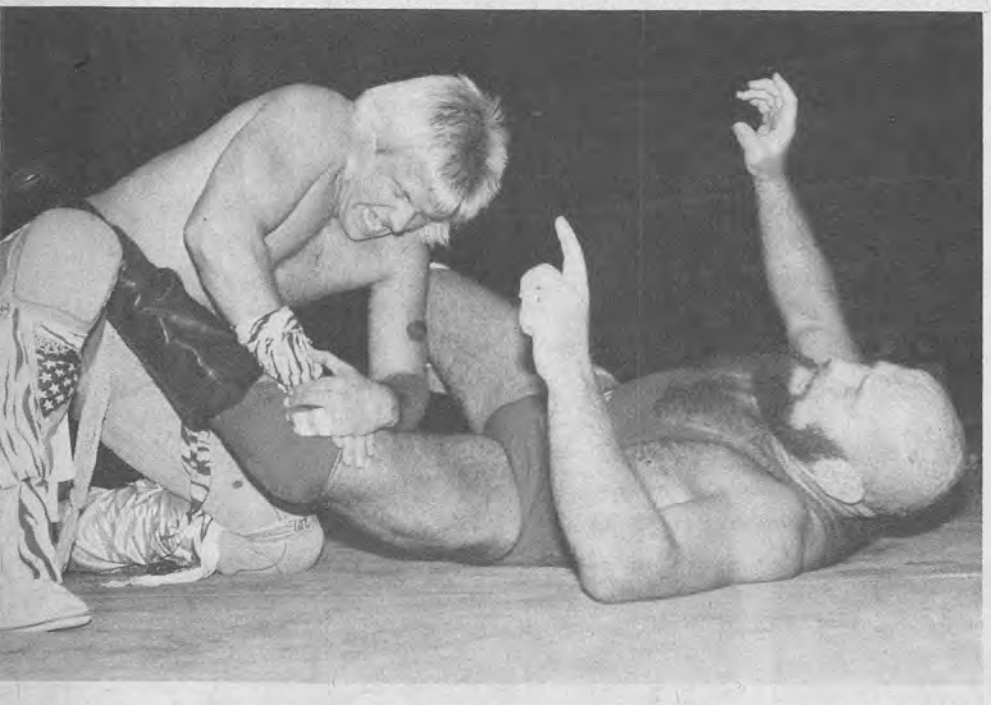
Morton mounts Eaton's shoulders and, by bridging his back, will flip his opponent to the mat in a pinning position (above left). Gibson warns Ivan Koloff as Morton works on Krusher Khruschchev (above right).

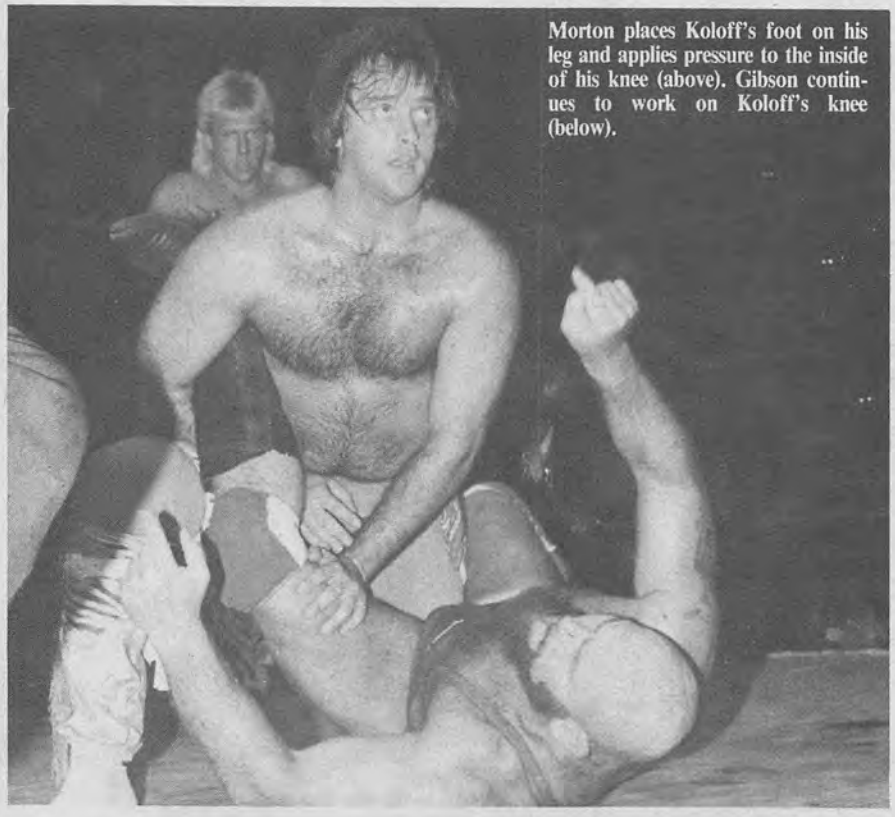
makes it tough to get in and out of the building, and it kind of cuts down on your privacy."

"Yeah, man, I can't remember the last time me and Rick had a quiet meal out," Gibson said laughing. "Seems there's always a half a dozen fans ready to ask us for autographs."

"But that's good, too," Morton said. "See, we love our fans. Sure, it's tougher to get privacy, and it's harder to move through a crowd to the ring, and it's tough to avoid crowds when arriving at a building or leaving later on. But we wouldn't have it any other way, right Rob?"

"You got that right, brother. Things are great right now, they've never been better. And son of a gun, it's getting better every day!"





Morton places Koloff's foot on his leg and applies pressure to the inside of his knee (above). Gibson continues to work on Koloff's knee (below).

Ryan asked Morton and Gibson about fan mail. Both wrestlers laughed.

"You ever see that scene in *Hard Day's Night* where The Beatles are in their hotel room and have to answer their fan mail?" Morton asked.

"Yeah," Gibson said, "you know the one. John and Paul and George get a bundle of mail each, and Ringo feels left out."

"Right, right," Morton continued, "until their road man, Shake I think his name was, Shake comes in and dumps a huge mail sack in Ringo's lap."

"That's us," Gibson said with a chuckle, "we're the Ringo I and Ringo II of wrestling! Honestly, we get more mail now than ever before. It's incredible."

Ryan asked the Express if they thought that their NWA World tag team title reign had a lot to do with their popularity.

"Well, that's a part of it, of course," Morton replied. "But I think the main thing was that we started to get seen on the WTBS cable this year. I mean, up until then, we were real, real popular from being on Mid-South wrestling, and Mid-South reaches a lot of fans across the country. But that TBS cable is something, man. A lot of loyal fans watch that show every week, and never miss a minute. We reached a whole new group of fans who never saw us before when we came to the World Championship area and began to be seen on TBS."

Ryan thanked Morton and Gibson for their time, and left the two to prepare for the night's match against NWA World tag team champions The Midnight Express.

"Amazing," Ryan thought to himself as he fought his way back through the crowd of bodies all craning their necks for a glimpse into the dressing room, "absolutely amazing."

Number one. With a bullet. □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS

CLOSE-UP

KING KONG BUNDY

THIS MASSIVE GIANT strikes a frighteningly imposing figure at the height of 6'2" and a weight of 420 pounds . . . Born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on November 7, 1957 . . . Grew up in Atlantic City, and attended high school, where he played football and wrestled . . . When graduation drew near, Bundy chose to work rather than to attend college . . . Found a job as a bouncer in an Atlantic City bar . . . Earned the nickname "King Kong" while a bouncer due to his ferocious manner of throwing rowdy patrons into the street . . . One night, a fellow by the name of Gary Hart was in the bar looking to cause trouble . . . Bundy didn't know who he was, and threw him into the street when Hart began causing too much trouble . . . Hart was impressed by Bundy's natural strength and incredible size . . . Brushing the dust from his suit, Hart returned to the bar and discussed the possibility of a wrestling career with the bouncer . . . Bundy was intrigued, and soon thereafter signed a contract to be managed by Hart . . . Wrestled his first match in Ft. Worth, Texas, in 1981, defeating Bill White in 47 seconds . . . Delivered his "big splash" maneuver to win the match, and broke several of White's ribs in the process . . . Wrestled in the Southeast area under the management of Hart . . . Feuded with Alberto Madril . . . Also wrestled in the World Class area during his first two years as a pro . . . It was during these early days as a pro that Bundy instituted what would become the two calling cards of his career: The $15,000 bodyslam challenge, and the five-count pin . . . The bodyslam challenge was extended not only to wrestlers, but to any fan who wanted to try and lift him . . . Wrestled in the Mid-South where he was managed by Gen. Skandor Akbar and feuded with Junkyard Dog . . . In a televised match for JYD's North American title, Bundy scored a three-count pin, insisted on a five-count, and JYD powered out just before the referee hit the mat a fifth time . . . After wrestling in the Mid-South for much of 1982, Bundy entered the Georgia area . . . Feuded with Dusty Rhodes, Tommy Rich, and Brett and Buzz Sawyer . . . Speculations arose that Bundy might join Paul Ellering's Legion of Doom . . . Bundy joined the Legion, but the association lasted only a few weeks in early '84 . . . Became outraged when a mistakenly open microphone on WTBS' *World Championship Wrestling* caught Ellering referring to Bundy as "420 pounds of Jell-O" and saying that "The Legion of Doom could go broke feeding him" . . . Bundy charged out of the dressing room and attacked his now-former manager . . . Then-National tag champs The Road Warriors rescued Ellering . . . Thus began a major feud in which Bundy would join with *anyone* who wanted to wrestle Hawk and Animal . . . On May 6, 1984, Bundy joined forces with Masked Superstar to defeat The Road Warriors for the National tag team title in Atlanta's Omni . . . The title was declared vacant only days later when Superstar was attacked by an unknown assailant, injured, and rendered unable to defend the title . . . In a tournament for the tag title on May 20, Bundy teamed with King Konga and was eliminated in the second round . . . Continued feuding with The Road Warriors for many months . . . Wrestled Jerry Lawler in Memphis, and was managed there by Jimmy Hart . . . After losing a loser-leave-town match to Rick Rude, signed a series of contracts to wrestle full-time in the AWA . . . Entered the AWA in early '85 where he became known as "Boom Boom" Bundy . . . Formed a tag team with Jerry Blackwell to renew his feud with then-AWA tag team champions The Road Warriors . . . The summer of '85 saw Bundy enter the WWF . . . Instituted a feud with Andre the Giant . . . Joined with manager Jimmy Hart . . . Was traded to Bobby Heenan along with The Missing Link when Heenan gave Hart the services of Adrian Adonis and an undisclosed amount of cash . . . During a match between Andre and John Studd in Toronto, Andre cut off some of Studd's hair, and Bundy ran in and injured Andre with a series of three big splashes . . . Later big splashed Hillbilly Jim five times during the WWF's 1985 Manager of the Year awards ceremony in September . . . Feuded with Jim and Andre for several months, wrestling in tag team matches with Studd against both men, and in singles matches against Andre . . . During a tour of Japan, wrestled WWF World champion Hulk Hogan and was defeated . . . Returned to the states, continuing his feud with Andre and his $15,000 bodyslam challenge . . . On February 15 in Phoenix, Arizona, Bundy interfered in a match between Magnificent Muraco and Hulk Hogan . . . Delivered a series of "Atlantic City Avalanches" and big splashes to the WWF champ . . . Hogan had to be carried from the ring on a stretcher . . . The WWF champ reportedly suffered rib and sternum damage and a concussion . . . The incident was aired on March 1 on NBC's *Saturday Night's Main Event* . . . As a result of the injury, Hogan demanded revenge against Bundy . . . As we go to press, the two men were scheduled to meet in a steel cage matchup in the Los Angeles-based main event of WrestleMania 2 . . . Whatever the results of WrestleMania 2, it is certain that the Bundy-Hogan feud will be the center of WWF controversy for many months to come. □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
TV SPORTS
KING KONG BUNDY
The Atlantic City Nightmare

CLOSE-UP

GREATEST MATCH

February 15, 1985. Actually, Bundy was not involved in this match; it was originally a contest between Hulk Hogan and Magnificent Muraco. Bundy interfered, attacked Hogan from behind, and proceeded to deliver a series of avalanches and splashes. Hogan was carried from the ring on a stretcher. Fans were shocked, but Bundy declared it the greatest day of his career.

FAVORITE MANEUVER

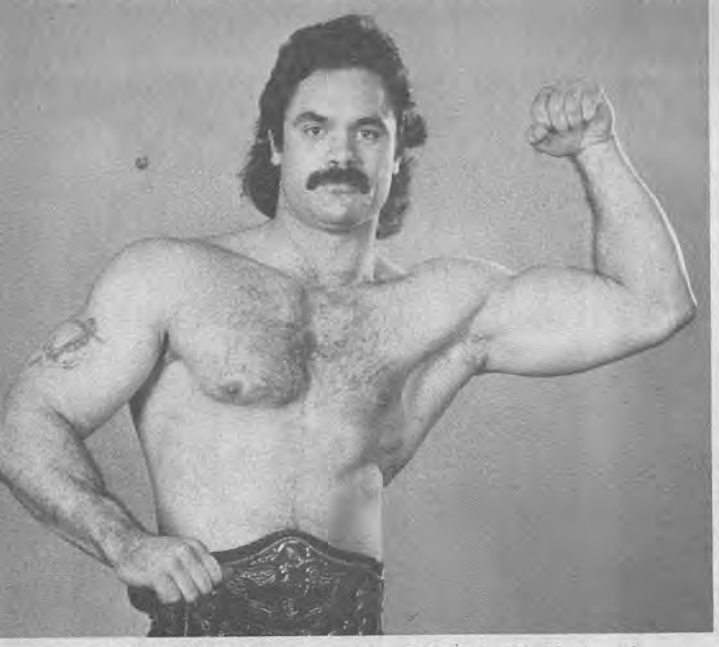
The big splash. When 420 pounds of King Kong Bundy is hurled through the air, the result is a punishing force of inconceivable proportions. The Bundy big splash is unparalleled in its destructive force. One might as well attempt to withstand the force of a building demolition company's wrecking ball.

TOUGHEST OPPONENTS

The Road Warriors. Before Bundy entered the WWF, he wrestled in the Georgia area and in the AWA, feuding with the Warriors in both places. Their battles were not so much the result of hatred as they were the product of Bundy's frustration—frustration at being unable to score any kind of decisive victory over Hawk or Animal.

MOST HATED OPPONENT

Andre the Giant. Bundy's feud with Andre is a logical extension of their natural personalities. Bundy is a big man, jealous of any other big man in the sport. His claims of being "the only giant in wrestling" are voided by Andre's very existence. Their feud has raged on for over a year, and is unlikely to be forgotten soon.



Now that World Class considers Rick Rude World champion . . .

. . . Kerry Von Erich will not be challenging for Ric Flair's NWA title.

WORLD CLASS PULLS OUT OF THE NWA:

WHAT IT MEANS TO WRESTLING

It will be months, possibly years, before the full impact of the World Class' decision to withdraw from the NWA will be felt. However, one thing is immediately clear: the wrestling world will never be the same

Photos by Buddy Myers

The following is a World Class Wrestling press release:

For years, World Class wrestling fans have increasingly complained about the NWA rules stating that a team or individual defending their world title could save their belt by disqualifying themselves during a tense moment of the match. This enabled Ric Flair to keep his title on numerous occasions. Because of this increasing outcry, and the incredible influence around the world that World Class wrestling area wrestling currently possesses, it was decided that a new wrestling organization would be formed independent of all other wresting affiliations. Officially declared as the World Class Wrestling Association, this occasion marks one of the most historic moments in wrestling history.

Because of its present TV coverage in places like Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, the Middle East, Europe, Japan, Australia, and South America, the WCWA automatically became the largest wrestling organization in the world. As a result, a world champion was first named so he could begin to represent World Class Wrestling as its champ throughout the world. As American heavyweight champ, Rick Rude was the man most qualified to assume the responsibilities as the World titleholder.

Without a doubt, this decision is probably the most exciting announcement of the decade. The WCWA rules specifically state that the World champ loses his belt upon disqualification, thus eliminating an easy out for any titleholder who has any other ideas besides wrestling a straight legal title match.

Below: As Rude works over The Missing Link, referee David Manning exchanges words with manager Percy Pringle. If Manning should for any reason disqualify Rude, it will cost him his title. Right: Kevin Von Erich was close to taking Flair's title when the NWA champion saved his title with a disqualification.

AND SO, with the issuance of this press release, World Class wrestling ended its relationship with the NWA, setting a precedent that might conceivably usher in a new era of professional wrestling throughout the world.

Secession was not symptomatic of Texans' disease, the Lone Star ethos of independence. During the last half dozen NWA conventions, the World Class had voiced its disapproval of the disqualification rule, a rule that enabled a champion to retain his title unless he was pinned or he submitted. Their denunciation of the rule was vigorous. Disqualifications and countouts, they claimed, have become a champion's protective armor, protecting him and his title against the challenge of a skilled opponent.

It now required an almost superhuman effort to wrest any NWA-sanctioned title from a champion; especially if the title was in the hands of a Ric Flair, who would flout the DQ rule indiscriminately. In Flair's hands, the rule became as much of a weapon as his figure-four leglock and abdominal stretch. According to unofficial statistics, disqualifications accounted for a staggering 65 percent of the finishes in Flair's matches in 1985.

World Class wrestlers were especially stung by Flair's predilection for the early exit. During one incredible weekend in Ft. Worth, Flair was disqualified in matches against Kerry, Kevin, *and* Lance Von Erich. In each match it was reported that the Von Erichs enjoyed a clear-cut advantage over the NWA champ, an advantage each saw vaporized after Flair conveniently disqualified himself.

The impact of the World Class action raises many significant questions.

Will the World Class still recognize Flair as champion? The World Class recognizes four World champions: Ric Flair of the NWA, Stan Hansen of the AWA, Hulk Hogan of the WWF, and Rick Rude of the World Class.

Will World Class wrestlers be able to wrestle for the NWA title? According to NWA President Bob Geigel, *any* wrestler in the world is eligible for a shot at the NWA top prize. He must move to an NWA-sanctioned territory—any place where the NWA champion defends the title—and achieve a success in the ring that is deserving of a title shot. As of this writing, Flair will no longer defend the belt in World Class territory, which means the titanic struggles between the NWA champ and the Von Erichs are for a time over.

Is the World Class preparing itself in any special ways to become a national promotion? As their press release indicates, World Class is already involved throughout the world, although promoting occasional wrestling matches in Nigeria, Bolivia, and Saudi Arabia doesn't automatically confer upon them world championship status. It must make further inroads into the the national media markets—Chicago, New York, Los Angeles—and the populated wrestling markets of Florida, Minnesota, and St. Louis. Already, through its extensive cable network contracts, World Class has saturated the country through television. Its wrestlers are recognizable all over the world. To take advantage of its visibility, it must tour the country (beyond Massachusetts and upstate New York, where World Class matches were held last year) and its champion must defend the title throughout the land, as Hogan, Flair, and Hansen do.

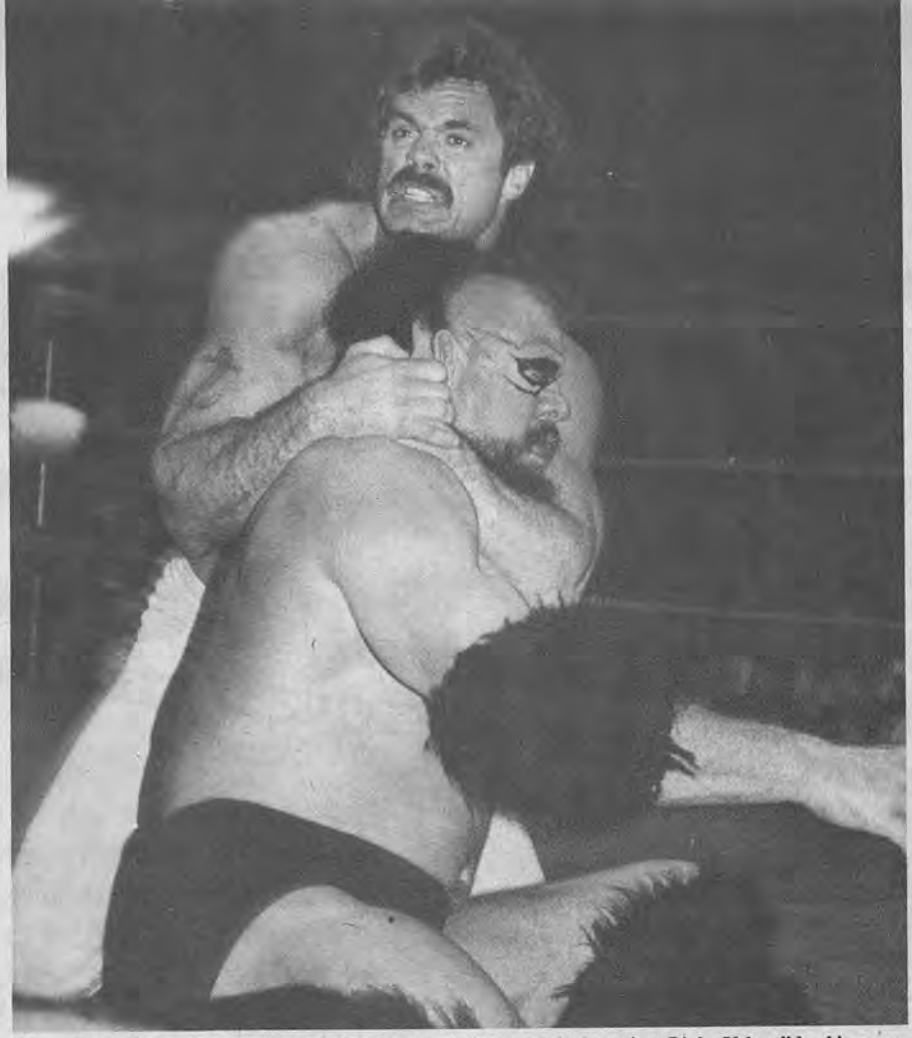
To do this World Class needs to beef up its roster, which means it must sign enough wrestlers to promote successfully on both coasts simultaneously. The world of wrestling has become more sophisticated and competitive in recent years; no longer can a regional promotion hope to qualify as a

world championship.

How will the World Class pull-out affect the NWA? It hurts the NWA considerably. According to our the May 1986 Top 15 ratings in *Inside Wrestling*, the World Class placed three wrestlers—Rick Rude, Kerry Von Erich, and Bruiser Brody—in the NWA category. Additionally, dropped from the NWA roster are such talented stars as Kevin and Lance Von Erich, Brian Adidas, The Missing Link, and The Grappler. While there is no doubt the split injures the NWA, World Class is also in danger, unless it can attract big-name wrestlers. Fans will tire of watching the same men wrestle night after night.

How will this affect the ratings? *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will not yet recognize the World Class heavyweight champion as a world champion and will no longer rate World Class wrestlers in the NWA *(see "Ratings Analysis" on page 24).* World Class must establish itself as a truly international organization over an extended period of time to earn world championship status. Its new disqualification rule must prove itself practical. We hope that other promotions will wait and gauge the success of the World Class' move before they attempt a similiar split. We also encourage the NWA to conduct a feasibility study testing the merits of the move. Perhaps they will discover that there are alternatives to their often-criticized disqualification rule, and by changing the rule themselves, a reconciliation between the two alliances might one day be possible.

What will be the effect of the new disqualification rule? The reason the NWA has never changed its disqualification rule is, according to Geigel, the fear that the title would change hands like a hot potato. Certainly, there is the danger of this happening, especially with the belt around the waist of a confirmed rulebreaker like Rick Rude. Should Percy Pringle interfere, it would now cost his man not only the match, but his title. The NWA was also wary of the increased role the referee will now have in the outcome of a match. The style and temperament of the officials is now as important as that of the wrestlers. Some referees will not tolerate a minor indiscretion, while others turn their eyes from all but the most flagrant violations. Is this fair? Should a world title rest on the subjective eye of an official?



Above: Rude has to be conscious of the placement of his chinlock against Link. If he slides his arms down around Link's throat, he runs the risk of having his title taken away from him. Below: As first champion, Rude is under a lot of pressure to elevate the credibility of the new title.

How long will it take the World Class to gain independent credibility? Instant credibility is not realistic. When cultivating a wrestling promotion, there is no such thing as an overnight success. It will take years to acquire the respect that the WWF, AWA, and NWA possess. Perseverance, courage, a commitment to excellence, and a large and liberal budget are the building blocks needed to succeed in this venture. It appears that World Class has them all. Now they must stand the test of time. □

Scouting Report

A NO-HOLDS-BARRED LOOK AT WRESTLING'S TOP STARS

In this magazine version of the TV counterpart seen on WTBS on Sundays at 7:05 p.m. Eastern time, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Scouting Reports will examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of wrestling's top stars. There will be no punches pulled as the sport's athletes undergo the harshest scrutiny anywhere in the wrestling world

NORD THE BARBARIAN

HOME TOWN: unknown
HEIGHT: 6'6"
WEIGHT: 316
YEARS AS PRO: 2
RATING: No. 7 in AWA

STRENGTHS:

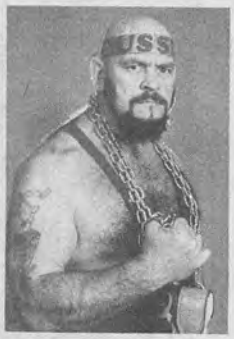
- Leg strength. Provides Nord with remarkable balance and power.
- Flying shoulderblock. Nord's ability to hurl his body parallel to the mat at a good height makes this a most effective maneuver.
- Relentless. Seldom, if ever, is seen taking a backward step—even when at a disadvantage.

WEAKNESSES:

- Strategy. Lacks any semblance of a predetermined fight plan.
- Lack of identity. Seems to emulate both Bruiser Brody (in his vocal inflections and ring style) and The Road Warriors (by his makeup).
- Lack of basic skills. Must rely on power moves, as he possesses virtually no scientific knowledge.

OTHER COMMENTS: Voted 1985's Rookie of the Year . . . Managed by Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie . . . Often teams with The Mongolian Stomper . . . Before competing in the AWA, made a fast reputation in the Mid-South.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: Nord might well have been better off remaining in the Mid-South. Al-Kaissie will exploit him rather than develop him as an athlete, and Nord can barely profit from having Mongolian Stomper as a tag partner. Nevertheless, Nord may be strong enough to carry the team, and provide AWA tag champs Scott Hall and Curt Hennig with some tough challenges.



IVAN KOLOFF

HOME TOWN: Moscow, Russia
HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 249
YEARS AS PRO: 25
RATING: No. 8 in tag teams (with Nikita Koloff)

STRENGTHS:

- Experience. Has challenged and beaten the best of three decades of wrestlers.
- Tactical master. Koloff possesses one of the most strategically brilliant minds in the sport.
- Underrated. Koloff's strength and speed often catch his opponents off-guard.

WEAKNESSES:

- Age. While still a highly dangerous competitor, Koloff is past his prime.
- Too comfortable with current repertoire. Doesn't seem willing to learn new moves and maneuvers.
- May now be more concerned with guiding Nikita's career than developing his own.

OTHER COMMENTS: Ended Bruno Sammartino's 7½-year WWF reign and held the belt for three weeks in early '71 . . . Known as "The Russian Bear" . . . His kneedrive from the corner ropes is a punishing maneuver.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: Koloff is undoubtedly mapping out a plan to regain the NWA World tag team belts. He is also engineering the strategy for his nephew Nikita's attack on Magnum T.A.'s U.S. title. His own singles career will likely remain on the back burner.

TED DiBIASE

HOME TOWN: Omaha, NB
HEIGHT: 6'4"
WEIGHT: 247
YEARS AS PRO: 11
RATING: No. 5 in tag teams (with Steve Williams); No. 6 in Mid-South

STRENGTHS:

- Renewed self-confidence has allowed DiBiase to call upon his vast scientific background.
- Though currently a fan favorite, DiBiase has retained his rulebreaking aggressiveness.
- His spinning toehold is a formidable and often underestimated weapon.

WEAKNESSES:

- Neck injury from Dick Murdoch undoubtedly still affects DiBiase both physically and mentally.
- Historical precedent for unstable personality; has switched from fan favorite to rulebreaker several times.
- Lacks significant power; mainly a moves-oriented wrestler.

OTHER COMMENTS: Voted 1982's Most Hated wrestler . . . No longer wears the controversial "loaded" glove on his right hand . . . Currently holds the Mid-South tag team title with partner Steve Williams . . . Also co-holds the PWF tag team title with Stan Hansen.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: The team of DiBiase and Williams looks as solid as ever, and should retain their title despite strong challenges from The Guerreros, The Fabulous Ones, The Sheepherders, and Dick Murdoch & Masked Superstar.

KENDALL WINDHAM

HOME TOWN: Sweetwater, TX
HEIGHT: 6'5"
WEIGHT: 220
YEARS AS PRO: 1½
RATING: No. 7 in Florida

STRENGTHS:

- Great fighting heart. Kendall will give it his all, even when hopelessly overmatched.
- Excellent stamina. Possesses a marathoner's cardiovascular strength.
- Amateur boxing background provides him with fast hands and excellent movement around the ring.

WEAKNESSES:

- Overconfidence. Perhaps his father and brother have pushed him too far too fast.
- Physique. Kendall *must* bulk up; he is courting a serious injury by remaining as skinny as he is.
- Slow recovery rate from injury. When Kendall does get injured, he wrestles at less than peak efficiency for longer than the average wrestler.

OTHER COMMENTS: Learned the rudiments of the sport from his father Blackjack Mulligan and his brother Barry . . . Held the Florida title from September 2, 1985, through February 19, 1986.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: Kendall has spent most of his brief career feuding with Kevin Sullivan's satanic clan, and it cost him the Florida title in a match against The Cuban Assassin. It is likely that Kendall will concentrate on the feud and not the title. What he *should* concentrate on before feuds and titles, though, is bulking up.

THE GRAPPLER

HOME TOWN: unknown
HEIGHT: 6'
WEIGHT: 241
YEARS AS PRO: 8
RATING: No. 2 in World Class

STRENGTHS:

- His Dory Funk Jr.-style bolo punch is an effective weapon.
- Can effectively hide rulebreaking, particularly his loaded boot, from referees.
- Explosive speed. Often surprises his opponents with bursts of perpetual motion during his matches.

WEAKNESSES:

- His strength is as a tag team wrestler; as a singles champion, he is out of his natural element.
- Knee injuries from years ago have not healed fully.
- Grappler's mask hinders peripheral vision, thus creating a poor defense against an aerial-based attack.

OTHER COMMENTS: Captured the World Class Texas title from Brian Adidas on December 9, 1985 . . . Currently advised by Percy Pringle . . . Was managed in the Southeast area by Don Carson . . . Wrestled for years in the Mid-South area.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: With the World Class area upgrading the value of their American title, more singles wrestlers will be entering the area to vie for that championship—and using the Texas title as a steppingstone. Grappler will have to work harder than ever to retain his Texas title.

BOB ORTON JR.

HOME TOWN: Kansas City, KS
HEIGHT: 6'1"
WEIGHT: 245
YEARS AS PRO: 14
RATING: unrated

STRENGTHS:

- Technical knowledge. Orton's scientific background is grounded in a sound amateur training.
- Good wrestling body. Sufficient bulk, yet not hindered by excessive musculature.
- Superplex. This devastating no-nonsense finishing move results in a pin 98 percent of the time.

WEAKNESSES:

- Is more concerned with being Roddy Piper's bodyguard than being a wrestler.
- Orton's recent foray into boxing has been disastrous; his skills are suspect, and his wrestling career is non-existent.
- Once a scientific master, Orton has become a headbuster.

OTHER COMMENTS: Tied with Tony Garea for 1973 Rookie of the Year honors . . . For two months in early 1984, held the NWA World tag team title with Don Kernodle under the management of Gary Hart.

OUTLOOK FOR '86: Cowboy Bob Orton is now Boxing Bob Orton. By boxing standards, his skills are atrocious; he would never last one round on an ESPN Friday night fight card. His credibility is plummeting fast. He must return to wrestling before the career damage is irreparable.

AWA Tag Champs
Curt Hennig & Scott Hall

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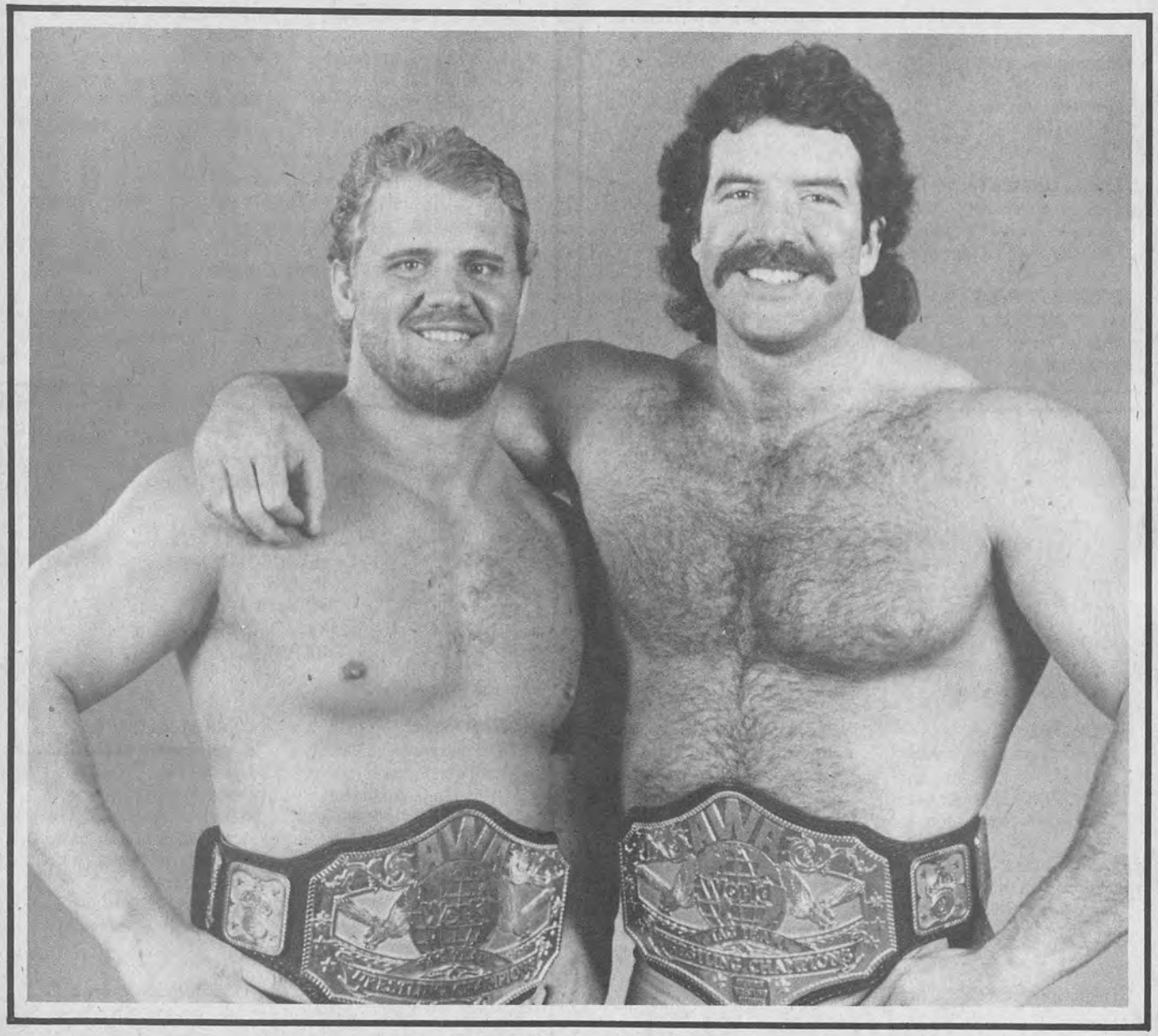
STYLE & ***SUBSTANCE***



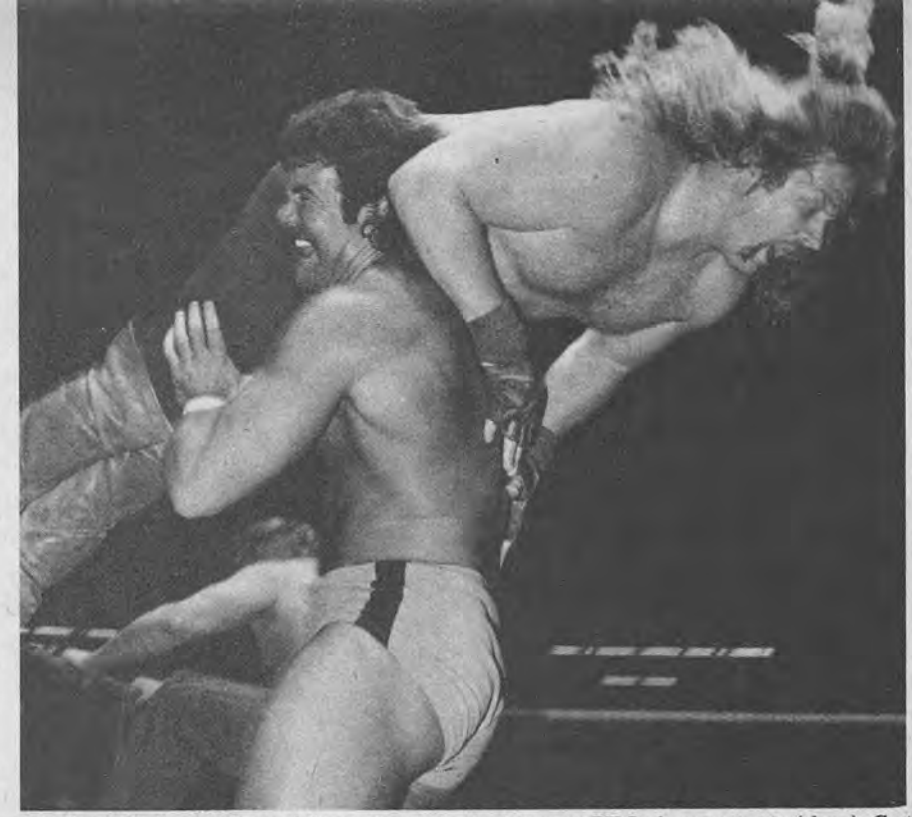
Scott Hall and Curt Hennig are that rarest of tag team combinations: Each man provides the other with the qualities that make their one tag team greater than the sum of its two parts

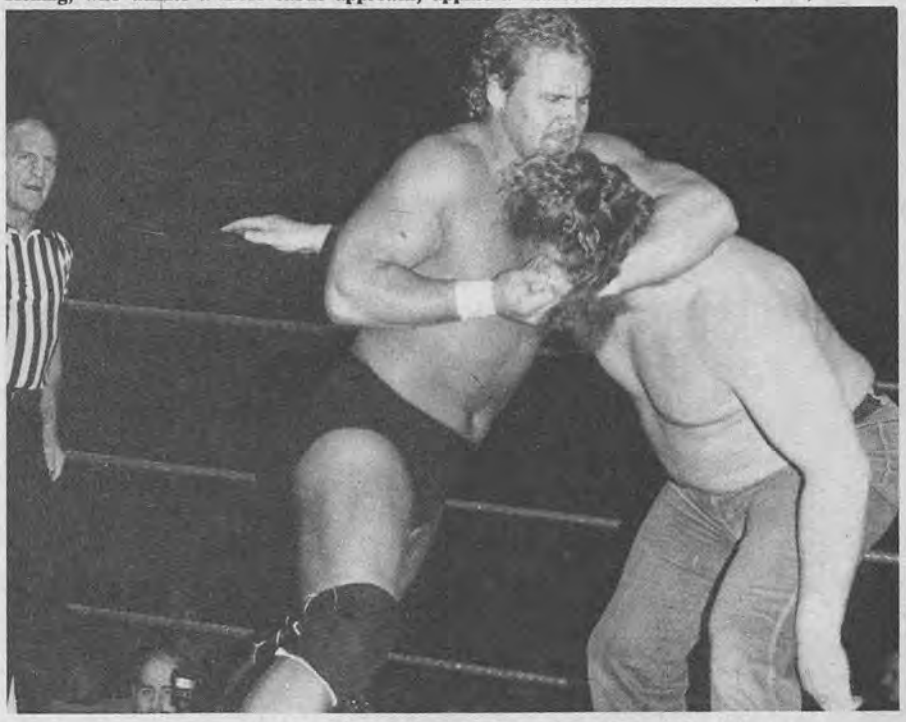
BEFORE SYLVESTER STALLONE began beating up a Russian by the name of Ivan Drago in *Rocky IV,* and before he blew up a country by the name of Vietnam in the *Rambo* series, he was involved in what many people forget was by many standards a fine movie in itself: the original *Rocky.* Surprise—no numeral an so superficial comic book characterizations.

In that movie, Rocky is telling Paulie about his relationship with Paulie's sister, Adrian. "Hey, yo, Paulie," grunts and stammers Rocky Balboa. "C'mon, Paulie, you know, we, uh, we fill gaps, you know? We got gaps, we fill 'em." Or words to that effect.

In his own truncated way, Rocky was explaining to Paulie that together, he and Adrian make each other whole. Taken separately, Rocky and Adrian are two incomplete and needing individuals. But put the two together, and each adds something to the other that neither one has alone. They "fill each others gaps" and because of that become the best people they can possibly be.

Much the same thing occurs in a fine tag team. Each member of the team brings qualities and talents to the union that cannot be utilized in the singles arena. And when the two men have trained for a length of time, and are competing together, they become greater than the two of them taken individually. They become championship material, and the scribes of wrestling history begin to jot down footnotes about them for future reference.





Standing 6'8", Scott Hall can deliver a devastating backdrop, as Bill Irwin can attest to (above). Curt Hennig, who utilizes a more subtle approach, applies a headlock on Scott Irwin (below).

Scott Hall and Curt Hennig have already made it into the wrestling history books. They defeated Jim Garvin and Steve Regal for the AWA World tag team title in a memorable 58-minute match in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the sport's observers are already saying that Hall and Hennig may be the team that makes AWA fans forget about The Road Warriors.

Pro Wrestling Illustrated was recently fortunate to have Hall and Hennig in our New York offices for a photo session, and the two men were eager to discuss the unique chemistry that makes them one of today's top-rated tag teams.

"I've been wrestling professionally for six years," Hennig said, "and I've teamed with a lot of people, and learned a lot from those people. Teaming with my father [Larry "The Axe" Hennig] helped give me a level of experience, maturity, and confidence in the ring that I might not otherwise have if I just went out there on my own and competed. That's something I try and pass along to Scott."

Hall's mustached face displayed a smile.

"I'm a big guy," Hall said, "and sometimes it's tough for me to get my body to do what I want it to do in the ring. It's easy to get frustrated, to get angry, and to let my emotions take over. But when that happens, I'm sunk. I can't do a thing in the

ring when that happens. Curt helps me by showing me that I can remain in control of myself, no matter what happens or doesn't happen in the ring. It sounds simple, but it's really, really tough."

"It's all a matter of mental control," Hennig added. "Mind over body. It's kind of like that old saying, 'If you can keep your wits about you when all around you others are losing theirs . . .' "

". . . then you've got a chance to score that pinfall," Hall said.

"Something like that," Hennig said, and the two men laughed.

If Hennig affords Hall a level of psychological control and understanding, what does Hall give to Hennig to push their team to be the best it can possibly be.

"Remember last Thursday?" Hall asked Hennig with a broad grin. Hennig groaned.

"Man, you should have seen me on Thursday," Hennig said. "I was wiped out. I mean, really, really, wiped. No way was I going to do anything but lie around the house, watch a little TV, and just relax. I didn't want to think about wrestling or sports or anything! Game shows. I just wanted to vegetate and escape by watching game shows all day."

Hall laughed. "Yeah, and I came over to your place and dragged your sorry butt off to the gym, didn't I?"

"Sure did," Hennig said with mock hatred in his voice, "and I could'a killed you for it."

Hennig twists Bill Irwin's wrist, inflicting tremendous pain (above). Hall drags Scott Irwin away from the ropes where he can attack freely (below).

"But that's the thing about training and working out," Hall said. "It's on those days when you absolutely don't want to train that you've got to get over to the gym and pump it out. Then the other days come easier. And look at Curt—he's in the best shape of his life. I stay on him, man, I ride his tail if he doesn't train, and I bust him even harder when he *does* get into the gym. Pushing those limits back, that's what we do. And you can see what it's done for Curt: He's bulking up, getting more definition, and adding more muscle. It shows, man, it really shows."

Before the discussion could continue much longer, though, Hall and Hennig began preparing to leave the *PWI* offices; they had a title defense at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena that night and wanted to arrive at the building early so that they could run through some match strategies and do some light workouts.

"Can I give you a ride to the Meadowlands?" inquired Senior Editor Bill Apter, who would be photographing the matches that night.

"Hey Bill, we're champions now," Hall said, "we ride in style."

Apter looked to the window of the office and saw a black stretch limousine waiting to take Hall and Hennig to New Jersey.

"Must be nice," Apter mused.

"Hey, you're looking at a team that's doing it," Hennig said. "I do for Scott, Scott does for me, and we push each other to be better all the time. Style and substance, substance and style."

Filling each other's gaps, so to speak.

"As for this," Hall said motioning to the limo, "this is just a luxury for today. We thought we'd do something extra, just for you, Bill. Climb in. We'll give *you* a ride to the Meadowlands. It's on us!"

Apter smiled, grabbed his camera bag, and climbed into the car. He was looking forward to photographing the matches that night—particularly Hall and Hennig's. □

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BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 6)

Adrian Adonis has moved into the number 10 position in *PWI's* Most Hated list. Juanita Bryan would like to see Adonis keep his sexual preferences as private matter.

can't imagine other wrestlers willing to hop into the ring with him. Sexual preference is a private matter, and not one to boast of like a carnival sideshow.

JUANITA BRYAN
Sunkist, CA

CRUSHED BY THE TRUTH

Ever since the January '86 issues of your family of magazines, I've been waiting for you people to catch yourselves on a rather glaring error you committed in reference to the September 28 "Super Clash" in Comiskey Park. You claimed there appeared that night *eight* former and current AWA, NWA, and WWF champions wrestling that night. There were, in fact, *nine*, and I'm not including

(Continued on page 50)

THIS MONTH IN...

The Wrestler

KERRY VON ERICH reveals to **MAGNUM T.A.** the secret of how to beat **RIC FLAIR**

HULK HOGAN'S route to **RODDY PIPER**—Discard "Ace" **BOB ORTON** to get to the joker!

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Are **THE ROAD WARRIORS** afraid of **NORD THE BARBARIAN**?

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☐ Spring/86

BETWEEN FALLS

(Continued from page 48)

Stan Hansen who captured the championship several months later.

The reason I'm so annoyed over the omission is because of who you forgot and, given your infatuation with WWF cartoon bozos and the NWA pretty boys, it makes all-too-perfect sense. I waited this long to write because I assumed, incorrectly, you would correct your glaring mistake.

You listed Ivan Koloff as WWF champ; Ric Flair, Kerry Von Erich, Harley Race, Shohei Baba as NWA champions; Rick Martel, Jumbo Tsuruta, and Nick Bockwinkel as the AWA champs. What about the one, the only, Da Crusher? You guys are just like the rest of the wrestling world in thinking that Da Crush is just an amusing geriatric beer-guzzler from Milwaukee, completely ignoring the fact that he is a *three-time* AWA World champion, as well as the only man in history to be co-holder of the World tag team championship in the '60s, '70s, and '80s. Plainly, Crusher is one of the world's greatest grapplers, yet he is treated by your magazines as weak-kneed prelim bum.

You owe this man an apology, a cover story, and a full-color centerfold as soon as possible. Forget Bruno Sammartino. The real living legend is Da Crusher!

NORBERT ELMO
Green Bay, WI

THE WAY THEY WERE

As a long time fan of women's pro wrestling, I had a difficult time accepting some of the statements in your April '86 cover story, "Women's Wrestling Come of Age: Is Wendi Richter More Popular Than Hulk Hogan?"

Without a doubt, Wendi Richter brings a much-needed boost to the sport. I've enjoyed her matches, good looks, class, and style. I

The rise of women's wrestling did not begin with Wendi Richter, points out Bill Hartsfell. Ann Casey (above) was among the many popular women wrestlers during the '50s and '60s.

hope more like her will soon join the pro ranks. However, as far as I'm concerned, women's pro wrestling came of age 30 years ago. The golden age of women's pro wrestling occured in the 1950s and 60s. The sport started going downhill in the 1970s and has been in decline ever since, although Richter offers a glow of hope for the sport's recovery.

I can remember when just about all the magazines featured a couple of articles on the girls. Today it is rare to find even one. Yes, Richter is worthy of all the attention, but I feel sorry for those who never saw the real greats in action. I'm talking about such legends as Mildred Burke, Nell Stewart, Judy Grable, Penny Banner, Lorraine Johnson, Vivian Vachon, Ann Casey, Melva Scott, Sweet Georgia Brown, and Sandy Parker. These girls combined beauty with athletic ability and grace, and none had to stoop to wearing masks or pantyhose. How ridiculous can one get! Oh, to see a barefooted leopard skin suited Ann Casey in action again!

BILL HARTSFELL
Hartford, CT □

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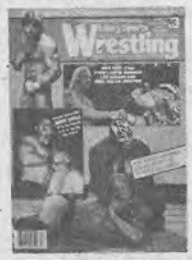

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KING'S COURT

(Continued from page 10)

Senior Editor Bill Apter promotes prejudice against rulebreakers during the "*PWI Scouting Report*" segment on WTBS, according to "A Fan." Apter, he says, is extremely unfair to NWA World champion Ric Flair.

T.A. at this point of his career.

I'd also like to talk about PWI's show, "Scouting Report" [on WTBS]. I have one question for Bill Apter. During the Flair-Andersons-Rhodes situation [in which Flair broke Dusty's leg], *Apter was brutal on Flair, which was okay, because he deserved it. But by constantly burying Flair's nose in it, he showed he wasn't about to give Ric a chance to explain. But, if it was the other way around, Apter would have listened to "The American Porkchop" for hours. My question for Apter: What did you expect Dusty to say when you asked him about all the people talking to you about your obvious bias against Flair? "Golly, Bill, I didn't notice anything." Look, I don't want to sound pro rulebreaker. But every time a so-called "good guy" does something totally against the rules, we're supposed to believe they're heroes. Thanks to fools like David Crockett and Bill Apter (get Ellner on that program quick) thousands of people believe it. The double-standard in wrestling is sick, but thanks to jerks like Crockett and Apter, it will probably continue for years and years. Thanks for listening.*

I was going to have Bill Apter answer your question, but his secretary told me he took the day off to go to the zoo with his wife, daughter and ... Dusty Rhodes. Hmmmmm. If Dusty buys Bill's kid a balloon, it's a definite conflict of interests. As to Ellner going on "Scouting Reports," I know it would definitely liven things up. Unfortunately, if Ellner says on TV one-tenth of the things he says in this office, television as we know it would cease to exist by order of the U.S. government, and we'd all have to listen to MTV on our radios (which might not be a bad idea). Seriously, though, there really is a double-standard in wrestling. However, I guess it can be compared to just about any other sport. For instance, in baseball, the Mets' Keith Hernandez is accorded a hero's welcome when he strides to the plate in New York's Shea Stadium. But in every other ballpark, he is booed unmercifully. As the song says, "root, root, root for the home team." In wrestling, the so-called fan favorites are always the "home team," no matter where they wrestle. I don't think this will ever change. Thank's for writing. ☐

(Continued from page 8)

rip their heads off, jack!" Rhodes began his startling reply. "This here's a million bucks we're talking about, daddy, and America's team is gonna be in there playing hardball!"

Speaking of the Rock 'n' Rolls, their chances for success in the Crockett Cup tournament may have been hurt by an injury to Rick Morton. Rick's right hand was broken in three places by the swinging tennis racket of Midnight Express manager **Jim Cornette**.

"You know, that's what me and mamma don't like about those wimpy Rock 'n' Rollers," Cornette told *PWI*. "They whine and scream about getting matches for my Midnights' NWA World tag team belts, and then when they get those matches they whine and scream about the action getting a little too rough. Little Ricky's hand is broken? Too bad!"

WWF fans were handed a scare recently on the NBC-aired program *Saturday Night's Main Event*. During a match in Phoenix, Arizona, between **Magnificent Muraco** and WWF champi-

With Hulk Hogan slumped in the far corner, Bobby Heenan instructs King Kong Bundy to execute the avalanche a second time.

on **Hulk Hogan**, Muraco's manager for the night **Bobby Heenan** (**Mr. Fuji** was ill with the flu and unable to appear at ringside) ran into the ring to break up Hogan's pin attempt on Muraco. When Hogan lifted Heenan into the air by the scruff of the neck, Heenan's charge **King Kong Bundy**, ran into the ring and hit the Hulkster from behind. Hogan collapsed into the corner, and Bundy proceeded to attack the champion with a series of avalanches and big splashes. Hogan had to be carried from the ring on a stretcher and taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

Days later, **Dr. Robert Ponovich** said that Hogan "sustained a cerebral or brain concussion. We watched him over the night and his status did not deteriorate. He also received multiple injuries of his low back or lumbar spine, his ribs, and his cervical spine."

With his ribs taped, an injured Hogan appeared in Madison Square Garden two days later and turned back the third New York City challenge of **Randy Savage** in a brutal lumberjack match.

Sgt. Slaughter says that he wants a shot against Central States champion **Bulldog Bob Brown** . . . **Paul Orndorff** is on the Intercontinental title trail; "Mr. Wonderful" already holds a non-title pinfall over Randy Savage . . . **Brickhouse Brown** is headed to the World Class area.

Kevin "The Magnificent" Kelly's valet, **Angel**, has been suspended in Kansas City because of her repeated interference in matches and for smacking several of Kelly's opponents in the head with an aerosol spray can . . . **Barry Windham** and **Mike Rotundo** returned from their recent Japanese tour with an undefeated record . . . **Kendall Windham** is

Mr. Wrestling II, for years one of the sport's most respected men, is working for Ron Fuller's bounty against The Bullet.

currently feuding with **The Cuban Assassin**, who has captured the Florida title from the lanky youngster.

Mr. Wrestling II as a bounty hunter? Believe it. The masked man is after **The Bullet** in the Southeast area, trying to collect several thousand dollars anted up by **Ron Fuller** . . . Polynesian Pacific champion **Jerry Lawler** is feuding with **Jimmy Snuka** in Hawaii and California . . . **Krusher Khrushchev's** leg injury continues to heal—slowly. Latest reports say that **Ivan** and **Nikita Koloff** will be without their partner for at least another two months . . . **Joe Pedicino** will host a 20-hour "Wrestle-thon," beginning at 10:30 a.m. on May 24, on WATL, Channel 36, in Atlanta. On May 19, Pedicino plans to run a show dealing with Atlanta wrestling in the '50s.

A final sad note this month: Longtime Florida wrestler and referee **Bubba Douglas**, a hometown favorite of fans in the Sunshine State, died recently of a heart attack at the age of 42. We mourn his passing, and send our condolences to his family and friends.

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

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DRESSING ROOM CONFIDENTIAL

(Continued from page 12)

treal in 1982, traveled to the Mid-Atlantic and then Florida, where he not only won his first championships (the Florida and Southern titles), but he met a man who would have a major impact on his life, a local favorite by the name of Barry Windham.

Though they trained together and often teamed together—and became best friends—both men frowned on being called a "tag team." Each man had aspirations as singles wrestlers and didn't want to commit himself to wrestling as a full-time team. But fate—and some dollar-wise promoters—would never let them have their way.

When it became clear to them that the only way they could stay apart was to leave Florida, Windham and Rotundo decided to wrestle in the Mid-Atlantic. Although they spread their arrival times, with Windham establishing himself as a single a couple of months before he was joined by Rotundo, they would be given a shot at the U.S. tag team champions, Black Bart and Ron Bass, and they couldn't turn down the opportunity. With the NWA World tag team titles within their grasp, however, Windham and Rotundo shocked the wrestling world by leaving the NWA and joining the WWF.

It was made clear to them by WWF promoters that there would be no talk of singles wrestling. At that point in their careers, however, with the WWF publicity machine in full gear, they were not about to make any demands. Winning the WWF tag team titles from Dick Murdoch and Adrian Adonis in January 1985 sent them on their way to fame and fortune they had only dreamed about.

Their WWF stint came to a sudden end when Windham left the area to return to Florida last November. He appreciated what the WWF had done for him financially, but he felt that he would hurt himself as an athlete by remaining. He and Mike craved to wrestle as solos and their request to do so was flatly denied. And if the limitations on their freedom were frustrating, the carnival-like WWF atmosphere was infuriating. The WWF was no place for a serious athlete, Windham said, adding that he was speaking for Rotundo as well. "As soon as Mike fulfills his contractual agreements," Windham said at the time, "he'll be joining me."

Rotundo impressed Stu Saks and Peter King in his North American debut against Louis Laurence in Montreal.

Contract agreements fulfilled, Rotundo and Windham are indeed planning their ring reunion. Presently, they have no plans to wrestle in one area for an extended period (though they have ruled out the WWF).

Watching them train together in Florida, I noticed that they looked happier than they have in years. There is no way of knowing how leaving the WWF has affected their earning power (though Rotundo says he is not about to trade in his Porsche for a '68 Buick), but at least they are together—and can decide for themselves if they will remain that way. □

ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 18)

do it, lady," he pleaded. "There's been many reporters up here, especially since Hansen won the AWA title. A few were turned away. A few more fled in fear. A few more than that, the persistent ones, wound up in Our Lady of Good Fortune."

"A church?" I asked, somewhat surprised.

"*A hospital, lady!*" he answered. "And one real cagey reporter ended up in Our Brothers-in-Arms."

"A hospital?" I asked wearily.

"No, lady. A funeral home."

I fingered the mace reassuringly, recounting the sobering conversation, when I was startled from behind. "What you want, lady?" shrilled a voice from in back. I wheeled around, the mace can firmly in grip, and found myself staring face to navel with eight-year-old Harry Hansen. I had memorized the names and faces of the nine Hansen children the night before in my hotel room.

"You from the IRS, lady?" Harry asked, his face an adorable mask of anger.

I had to laugh. "No, no Harry, I'm not. I'm a reporter from a big wrestling magazine who wants very badly to do a story on you and your daddy."

"My daddy don't like reporters," he glowered protectively. "If I were you, I'd get out of here while you can."

"Well, honey," I said, pulling a red lollipop from my bag, "I don't want to hurt your daddy. I want to write a great big story on him that millions of people will read. Can you help me?"

Harry's eyes glazed open at the sight of the lollipop. "My daddy ain't home now," he said, grabbing the sucker from my hand, "but come with me and I'll show you Mom. And don't call me honey."

Harry walked me past the silo, alongside the pasture where at least two dozen cattle grazed in lazy contentment. At the front door of the traditional white clapboard farmhouse, we were stopped by another member of the miniature Hansen corps. "You must be Hillary Hansen," I said, handing the beautiful young girl a lemon lollipop.

"No, Hillary is my twin sister. My name is Helen. You're a pretty lady. *I like you.*" The little angel paused in thought. How did Hansen ever produce such a good-looking brood? "But you better get out of here before Daddy comes home. He doesn't like you."

"But he hasn't even met me, honey," I said, my nerves starting to unravel.

"Daddy don't like anybody," she said, and tumbled into the house.

I followed the two children into the living room and sat down on a high leatherback chair. I was glad that Hansen wasn't home. Perhaps my accessibility to his family might warm his heart toward an eventual interview. It was time to turn on the charm.

"You must be Liz Hunter," a voice from behind me said. "This is a real pleasure. My name is Emmy Lou Hansen."

The hand that was extended in greeting belonged to the most beautiful woman I had ever seen in my life, but my shock over her unexpected comeliness was forgotten when the front door flew off its hinges. Standing there with dried blood clotted over his face, and a pickax squeezed tightly in his hand was Stan Hansen. "You're gonna pay for this you _____ broad!" he snarled and approached me slowly.

(To be continued next month.) □

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OFF THE TOP ROPE

(Continued from page 20)

Dear Dan,

Do me a favor! Describe "wormslime" without using the names Tommy Rich, Ted DiBiase, or Michael Hayes.

JEFF CROUTHERS
No Address

Dear Jeff,

Wormslime; ***noun;*** **Dusty Rhodes.**

Hey Dan,

You must have just lost all hope for the world. I would imagine you're depressed since your favorite rulebreaker, Buzz Sawyer, just turned fan favorite.

Even Buzz Sawyer realized rulebreaking isn't the way to go. You really must be questioning yourself. You tell everyone how great it is to be a rulebreaker, and now even Buzz Sawyer turns against you.

Doesn't that tell you something? Probably not, but I just wanted to add further insult in your hour of misery, Dan. You deserve it!

STEPHEN CARUSO
Columbia, MD

Hey Stephen,

Whatever misery I may be feeling has been more than compensated for by the realization that I don't know you personally. As for Buzz, he could no longer take the yahoo ignorance and vilifications that boors like you insist on shouting at men who don't know how to grovel. Weary from the abuse he didn't deserve, Buzz surrendered.

Dear Bighead,

I'm sick and tired of your putting down the incredible Hulk Hogan and Mad Dog Vachon! They are two of the best in the AWA. I know that Hulk can beat Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA title. If you weren't such a bighead, you'd know they are the best.

SHAWN PEASY
Bolling, MT

Dear Smallhead,

I agree that appreciation of Hogan and Vachon rests on having a little

After winning the WWF title from The Iron Sheik, Hulk Hogan tries to send the deposed champion back to Iran. Danny had Hogan pegged even before he left the AWA to wrestle for the WWF title. Dan was a brilliant writer who will never be forgotten.

head. In fact, the less space for brains one has, the better Hogan and Vachon must appear. As people in Montana can't have much of anything, far be it for me to disturb your faith. If believing in Hogan and Vachon eventually fails for you, may I suggest the tooth fairy, Santa Claus, and Ronald Reagan? For the rest of us, Hogan and Vachon will remain pompous fools unable to do anything but attract fans. When one of them wins a major title, feel free to write me that I'm wrong. I don't expect to be hearing from you this century.

[Even Danny couldn't foresee the sordid tangle of circumstance that would lead Hulk Hogan to the WWF title. As far as I am concerned, in light of Hogan's underwhelming title reign, Danny's reply is as appropriate as ever.]

D.S.,

About eight months ago I inherited an awesome mantle of responsiblity. The rewards of its upkeep have included death threats, character slurs, venomous taunts, and estrangement from the public. Sometimes the struggle doesn't seem worth the effort. Sometimes, the tendency is to flout the truth and let the public be damned to their private hells of ignorance and misbelief.

E.E.
New York

E.E.,

Every involuntary repulsion that arises in your mind give heed unto. It is the surface of a central truth. If anything is worthy of a man's best and hardest effort, that thing is the utterance of what he believes to be the truth. *Don't give up the ghost yet, bucko.* Time is too precious to waste on arbitrary thought.

D.S.
Elysian Fields □

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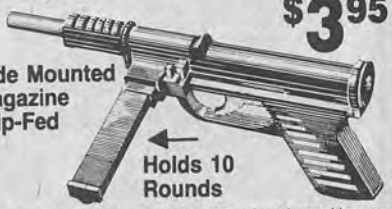

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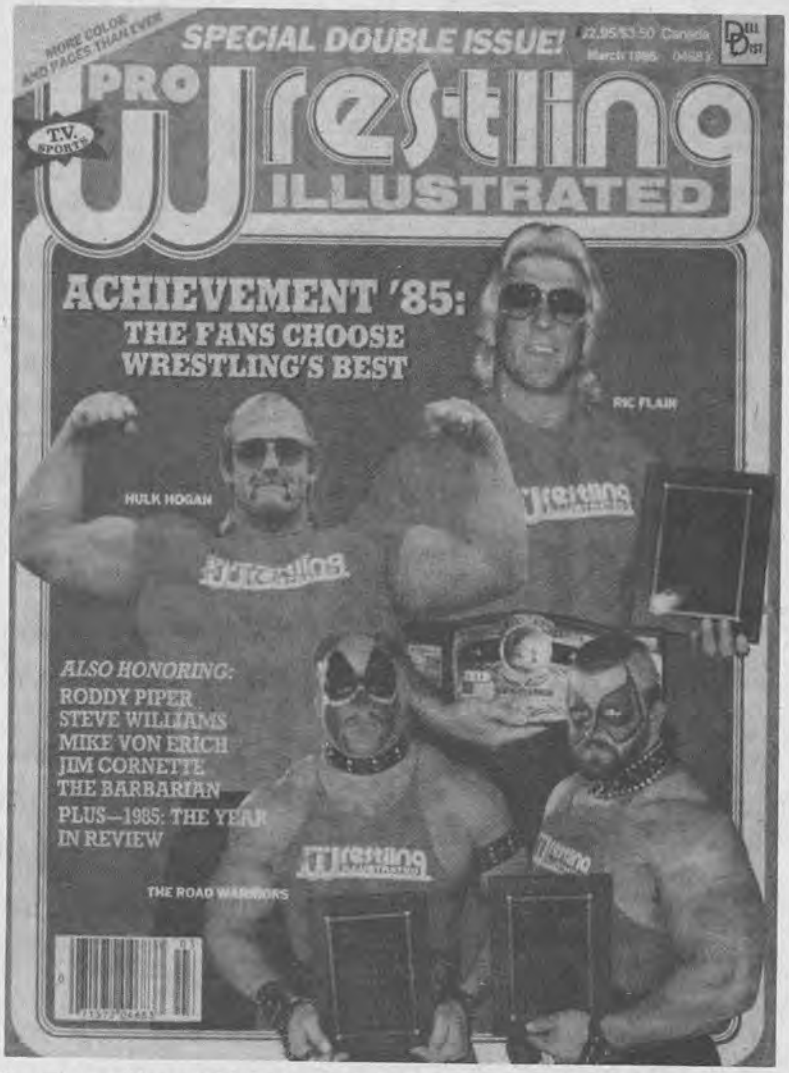

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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 31)

Doll? Heck, daddy, that poor ol' gal was getting *abused.* She cast her lot with evil men and they took advantage of her. The American Dream can't stand for that, no way, no how.

BILL APTER: You went against the advice of your closest friends, though. Have you wondered why a good friend like Magnum T.A. refuses to recognize the new Baby Doll? Perhaps he knows something you don't.

***RHODES:* Understand, Willie Apter, that Magnum T.A. crosses at the green, and not in between. My good buddy is a cautious man, a considerate man, a careful man. It is not at this moment in his heart to forgive or forget the misdeeds committed by Baby Doll in the past. Time will heal Magnum's wounds. He will come to love Baby Doll as I do.**

PETERS: And how is that?

***RHODES:* Baby Doll is my personal.**

ELLNER: Your personal what?

***RHODES:* Just my personal, boy. Ain't that enough for you?**

ELLNER: Well I know that Baby Doll's relationships with Gino Hernandez and Tully Blanchard became intimate and, perhaps, anatomical after a while. I'm sure your fans would like to know how deep you and Baby Doll are involved.

RHODES: Are you implying, boy, that Baby Doll . . .?

ELLNER: If the shoe . . .

PETERS: I think Ellner wants to know if the relationship between Baby Doll and yourself has exceeded that of just good friends.

ELLNER: Not to mention the bounds of good taste.

***RHODES:* Willie and Craig, I fear I might have to pop this geek momentarily if he persists with his soiling insults.**

APTER: Let's change the subject to something less personal, Dusty. Tell us about the two tag teams you find yourself part of. Is there one you prefer to another? Will either the

(Continued on page 60)

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June 1983/Cover stories: Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson. PLUS: Brody, Sullivan.

July 1983/Cover story: Valiant-Humperdink. PLUS: Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.

October 1983/Cover stories: Martel-Valentine, Mulligan. PLUS: Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.

November 1983/Cover stories: Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody. PLUS: Slater, Wrestling II, Backlund.

December 1983/Cover story: Windham-LeDuc. PLUS: Santana, Sullivan, Garvin, masked wrestlers.

January 1984/Cover stories: Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel. PLUS: Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.

February 1984/Cover stories: Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen. PLUS: Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.

March 1984/Cover story: Starrcade '83 featuring Flair, Steamboat & Youngblood, Piper-Valentine. PLUS: Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.

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DECEMBER 1985

April 1984/Cover stories: Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki. PLUS: Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.

May 1984/Cover stories: LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins. PLUS: The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!

June 1984/Cover stories: Windham-Flair, Gilbert. PLUS: Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.

July 1984/Cover stories: Flair-Gordy. PLUS: Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA Tag team tournament.

August 1984/Cover stories: Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes. PLUS: Zbyszko, Von Erich, The Faces Of Wrestling.

September 1984/Cover stories: Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.

October 1984/Cover stories: Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video. PLUS: Atlas, Spoiler, historic Orange Bowl card.

November 1984/Cover story: Von Erich & Billy Jack. PLUS: Andre, Fabulous Ones, The Summer Wars!

December 1984/Cover stories: Rich-Gilbert, Martel. PLUS: Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class action weekend.

January 1985/Cover stories: Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund. PLUS: Fabulous Ones, *Pro Wrestling USA*.

February 1985/Cover stories: Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts. PLUS: Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.

March 1985/Cover story: Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs. PLUS: 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.

April 1985/Cover stories: Von Erich-Blackwell, Billy Haynes-Jesse Barr. PLUS: Hart, Irwins, 1985 in Pictures.

May 1985/Cover stories: Albano, Freebirds-Flair. PLUS: Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas closeup.

June 1985/Cover story: Pro Wrestling U.S.A. PLUS: Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.

July 1985/Cover stories: Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches. PLUS: Backlund, Snuka.

August 1985/Cover stories: Flair vs. Nikita. PLUS: Orndorff, Slaughter, Haynes, Parade of Champions II.

September 1985/Cover stories: Adams vs. Von Erich, Orndorff. PLUS: Sawyer, Kamala, Barr, Atlanta action.

October 1985/Cover stories: Martel vs. Hayes, Richter. PLUS: Savage, Adams, Magnum T.A., Road Warriors.

November 1985/Cover stories: Freebirds vs. Warriors, Mid-South action. PLUS: Billy Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.

December 1985/Cover stories: Hogan, Zbyszko vs. Martel. PLUS: Youngblood, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.

January 1986/Cover Stories: Abdullah, Randy Savage vs. Tito Santana, Humongous. PLUS: Baron Von Raschke, Terry Taylor, Night in Comiskey Park.

February 1986/Cover stories: Junkyard Dog, 1986 Datebook. PLUS: Nick Patrick, Jim Garvin, Butch Reed.

March 1986/Cover stories: Starrcade '85 with Rhodes vs. Flair, The Russians vs. Rock 'n' Rolls, Tully vs. Magnum. PLUS: Jesse Ventura, Maha Singh, Sunshine.

April 1986/Cover stories: 1985 The Year in Pictures, Rick Martel & Stan Hansen, Kevin Sullivan & Maha Singh. PLUS: Hulk Hogan, Ted DiBiase.

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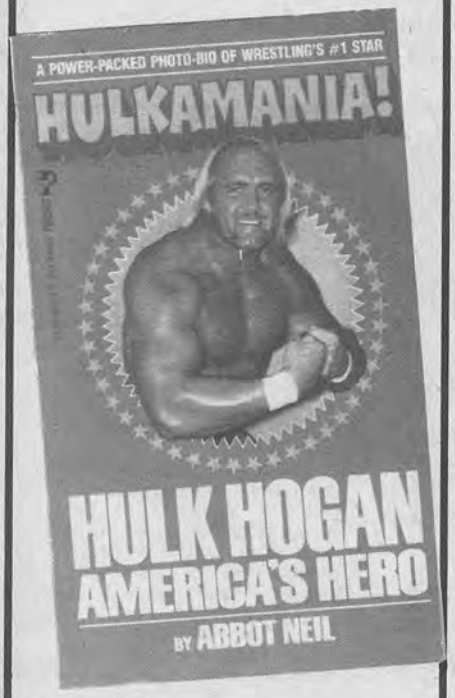

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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 58)

Dusty Rhodes plans to team with Magnum T.A. against the Russians in defense of America. But he will also team with Ronnie Garvin against the combination of Ric Flair and Arn Anderson.

Risky Business Boys or America's Team make a run for the NWA tag team title?

RHODES: **Right now I see the teams as two *entities* embarked on separate enterprises of equal importance. Ronnie Garvin and myself are determined to make life a miserable affair for Mr. Ric "Call Me Coward" Flair. You saw what we did to Flair and his miserable cur of a cousin, Arn Anderson. We beat them to within an inch of their worthless lives. Americas Team, my venture with Mr. T.A., is more flag oriented. Our goals are to rid the wrestling world of the ominous presence of the Koloffs and Krusher Khrushchev. Dusty Rhodes and Magnum T.A. are fed up with their malignant attacks on the United States of America.**

PETERS: So with neither team do you anticipate gunning for the NWA tag team championship.

RHODES: **Let's not be premature, Craig Peters. Under the right circumstances a championship belt can be quite attractive.**

ELLNER: Under what circumstances would a championship belt be unattractive?

RHODES: **If it required too much time to defend. I'm a busy man. Mandatory defenses infringe on my time.**

APTER: What about Tully Blanchard? How has he reacted to everything

(Continued on page 62)

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PRESS CONFERENCE

(Continued from page 60)

that has gone on?

RHODES: **Typical jealousy, expected rage, the usual threats. Poor Tully, I'm afraid, has become boring in his hurt and anger and self-pity. Mostly, he's embarrassed since he knows Baby Doll has repudiated the entire Blanchard myth. The public knows him now for the roach he is. And by bringing in J.J. Dillon, it becomes a case of the dimwit leading the dimwitted.**

ELLNER: Have you ever given any thoughts toward retiring?

RHODES: **Dear, fool, Dusty Rhodes is in the prime of his career. Perhaps it is you who should seek another line of work.**

PETERS: What about the NWA title? Do you still want a piece of Flair now as much as you did after he broke your ankle?

RHODES: **A piece of Ric Flair is always a tasty slab of meat. Of course I would love that strap of gold around my waist again. It's the grandest feeling a man can have, to reach the pinnacle of his profession. And I'll keep fighting for it. That you can bank on.**

APTER: How do you feel about the World Class pulling out of the NWA and starting a separate alliance with Rick Rude as champion?

RHODES: **I can't say I agree with their reasoning. They claim that Flair has the title because he's always disqualifying himself. Well, I've beaten the man for the title, and so has Kerry Von Erich. It's not easy to do, but no one ever said winning the championship of the world is a simple task. I wish them the best of luck, but I think their plan might backfire.**

PETERS: Thanks for joining us here today, Dusty. Good luck to you.

RHODES: **Thank you Mr. Peters. And I just want to assure my fans that they should not worry about this Baby Doll business. I have complete faith in the woman. She's good. She's kind. She's loyal. It just took the right person to revive those characteristics in her. And that person was yours truly, truly, and truly.** □

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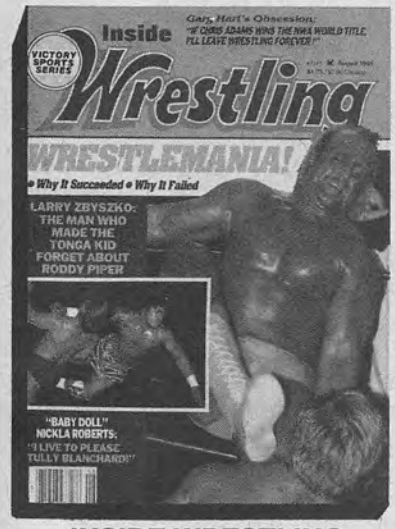

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ARENA

This special feature is for all fans who want to know who won and who lost . . . and how. *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will print eyewitness reports from correspondents who attend the matches. If you'd like to have your correspondent report printed in the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine, send it to: *Arena Report; PWI, Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571.*

SHOWBOAT SPORTS PAVILION (Las Vegas, NV): **Shawn Michaels** defeated **Buddah Khan** . . . **Scott Hall** beat **Doug Somers** . . . **Jerry Blackwell** defeated **Boris Zukhov** . . . **Curt Hennig & Marty Jannetty** defeated **Boris Zukhov & Nord The Barbarian** by disqualification . . . **Larry Zbyszko** beat **Leon White** by countout . . . **Stan Hansen** defeated **David Sammartino.**

—Jay Elliott Jr.

NASSAU COLISEUM (Uniondale, NY): **Jesse Ventura** defeated **Uncle Elmer** by disqualification . . . **Cpl. Kirschner & Tito Santana** defeated **The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** . . . **Randy Savage** received a countout victory over **George Steele** . . . **Cowboy Bob Orton** fell to **Dan Spivey** . . . **Tony Atlas & Hercules Hernandez** battled to a draw . . . **Pedro Morales** pinned **Les Thornton** . . . **Superfly Afi** defeated **Barry O** . . . **Lanny Poffo** beat **Terry Gibbs** . . . **Rene Goulet** defeated **George Skaaland.**

—Sal Gnolfo

THE CIVIC CENTER (Baltimore): **The Road Warriors** defeated **Ivan & Nikita Koloff** in a lights out steel cage match . . . **Ric Flair** defeated **Dusty Rhodes** by disqualification . . . **Stan Hansen & Sgt. Slaughter** wrestled to a double-disqualification . . . **Magnum T.A.** defeated **Baron Von Raschke** . . . **The Midnight Express** defeated **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** . . . **Larry Zbyszko** defeated **Nick Bockwinkel** by disqualification . . . **Tully Blanchard** beat **Jimmy Valiant** . . . **Scott Hall** defeated **Boris Zukhov.**

—Jason Wilson

ABRAMS FIELD HOUSE (Ft. Hood, TX): **The Tonga Kid & The Samoans** defeated **Mike Golden & Diablos I & II** . . . **Bruiser Brody** defeated **Ken Massey** . . . **Big Bubba** won by disqualification over **Elijah Akeem** . . . **Paul Diamond & The Texas Longrider** defeated **Mighty Zulu & Killer Brooks** . . . **Wild Bull Ayala** beat **Mighty Zulu** . . . **Mike Golden** defeated **Ron Class.**

—Bob Miller

THE BOSTON GARDEN (Boston): **Bruno Sammartino** defeated **Roddy Piper** in a steel cage match . . . **Randy Savage** pinned **Tito Santana** to capture the Intercontinental title . . . **Rick Steamboat** beat **Magnificent Muraco** in a Hawaiian death match . . . **The Hart Foundation** defeated **The Killer Bees** . . . **George Steele** pinned **Tiger Chung Lee** . . . **Hillbilly Jim** defeated **Big John Studd** by countout . . . **Superfly Afi** defeated **Barry O** . . . **Lanny Poffo** beat **Paul Christy.**

—Edward O'Brien

ROSEMONT HORIZON (Chicago): **The Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** defeated **Cpl. Kirschner & Lanny Poffo** . . . **Tito Santana** defeated **Randy Savage** . . . **Jesse Ventura** was disqualified against **Uncle Elmer** . . . **Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine** beat **The British Bulldogs** . . . **George Steele** defeated **Iron Mike Sharpe** . . . **King Tonga** beat **Barry O.**

—Gerald A. Beeson

RICHFIELD COLISEUM (Richfield, OH): **Paul Orndorff** beat **Roddy Piper** in a steel cage match . . . **Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine** defeated **The British Bulldogs** . . . **Randy Savage** beat **George Steele** by disqualification . . . **King Kong Bundy & Big John Studd** beat **Tony Atlas & Lanny Poffo** . . . **Steve Lombardi** fell to **Hillbilly Jim** . . . **Ted Arcidi** defeated **Moonsog Spot** . . . **King Tonga** beat **Paul Christy** . . . **Dan Spivey** defeated **Barry O.**

—Kenny Varga

THE CIVIC ARENA (Pittsburgh): **Junkyard Dog** pinned **Terry Funk** . . . **Tito Santana** beat **Randy Savage** . . . **Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake** defeated **The British Bulldogs** . . . **Iron Sheik** defeated **George Steele** by disqualification . . . **Dan Spivey** pinned **Barry O** . . . **King Tonga** defeated **Iron Mike Sharpe** . . . **Cpl. Kirschner** pinned **Tiger Chung Lee** . . .**Siva Afi** defeated **Rene Goulet** . . . **S.D. Jones** was pinned by **Hercules Hernandez** . . . **Tony Garea** defeated **The Red Menace.**

—Mark Chutko

REPORT

RIVERSIDE CENTROPLEX (Baton Rouge, LA): **Terry Taylor** won a 20-man bunkhouse battle royal . . . **Ted DiBiase & Steve Williams** defeated **Buzz Sawyer & Dick Slater** . . . **Terry Taylor** defeated **Rob Ricksteiner** . . . **The Sheepherders** beat **The Bruise Brothers** . . . **Eddie Gilbert** beat **Al Perez** . . . **The Fabulous Ones** defeated **Tommy Wright & Ricky Gibson** . . . **Masked Superstar** beat **Shawn O'Reilly** . . . **Brett Wayne Sawyer** defeated **Gustavo Mendoza.**

—Veto Graffeo

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN (New York): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Randy Savage** in a lumberjack match . . . **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** in martial arts challenge match . . . **Adrian Adonis** defeated **George Steele** by disqualification . . . **Iron Sheik & Nikolai Volkoff** defeated **Cpl. Kirschner & Dan Spivey** . . . **Lanny Poffo** pinned **Rene Goulet** . . . **King Tonga** defeated **Les Thornton** . . . **The Killer Bees & The Hart Foundation** battled to a draw . . . **King Kong Bundy** pinned **George Wells** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Barry O** . . . **Ted Arcidi** defeated **Terry Gibbs.**

—Michael Tierney

THE MEADOWLANDS (East Rutherford, NJ): **Ric Flair** defeated **Magnum T.A.** . . . **Stan Hansen & Sgt. Slaughter** battled to a double-countout . . . **The Road Warriors & Dusty Rhodes** beat **Ivan & Nikita Koloff & Baron Von Raschke** . . . **Scott Hall & Curt Hennig** defeated **The Long Riders** . . . **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** defeated **The Midnight Express** by disqualification . . . **Larry Zbyszko** beat **Nick Bockwinkel** by disqualification . . . **Nord The Barbarian & The Mongolian Stomper** beat **Buck Zumhofe & Marty Jannetty** . . . **Jimmy Valiant** scored a disqualification win over **Tully Blanchard.**

—Brian Coward

THE SPORTS ARENA (Los Angeles): **Hulk Hogan** pinned **Terry Funk** . . . **Roddy Piper** defeated **Junkyard Dog** . . . **Rick Steamboat** defeated **Magnificent Muraco** . . . **Pedro Morales** defeated **Cowboy Bob Orton** by disqualification . . . **The Hart Foundation** defeated **George Wells & Scott McGhee** . . . **Adrian Adonis** pinned **Jose Luis Rivera** . . . **Steve Gatorwolf & Dan Spivey** defeated **Matt Borne & Mr. X** . . . **Hercules Hernandez** pinned **S.D. Jones** . . . **Siva Afi** defeated **Rene Goulet.**

—Robert Varela

CIVIC AUDITORIUM (Stockton, CA): **Superstar Graham & Playboy Buddy Rose** lost by disqualification to **Jimmy Snuka & Rocky Johnson** when **Terminator II** interfered . . . **Steve Pardee & Moondog Moretti** wrestled to a draw . . . **Terminator I** lost by disqualification to **Victor Rivera** . . . **Woody Farmer** beat **The Great Goliath** . . . **Carl Batterman & Ricky Thompson** beat **Mike Lucas & Mike Ellison.**

—Pat Riley

JOE LOUIS ARENA (Detroit): **Brutus Beefcake & Greg Valentine** beat **The British Bulldogs** . . . **Tito Santana** defeated **Randy Savage** by disqualification . . . **Pedro Morales** beat **Cowboy Bob Orton** . . . **Tony Atlas** defeated **Johnny Valiant** . . . **Superfly Afi** beat **Steve Lombardi** . . . **Hercules Hernandez** defeated **Lanny Poffo** . . . **Dan Spivey** beat **Barry O.**

—Eric Pearson

THE ARENA (St. Louis): **Harley Race** pinned **Ric Flair** in a non-title steel cage match . . . **Tully Blanchard** beat **Jimmy Valiant** . . . **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** beat **The Midnight Express** by disqualification . . . **Nick Bockwinkel** defeated **Larry Zbyszko** by disqualification . . . **Jerry Blackwell** pinned **Kareem Muhammad** . . . **Debbie Combs** defeated **Althea Montague** . . . **Rocky Johnson** beat **Timothy Flowers.**

—Erik Striegel

RECAP: Despite several losses to **Tito Santana** this month, **Randy Savage** rallied back to win the WWF Intercontinental title in Boston . . . **Magnificent Muraco** has been losing regularly to **Rick Steamboat** as the feud between these two Hawaiians seems to be winding down . . . **The Midnight Express** has taken a beating from **The Rock 'n' Roll Express**, yet continues to retain the NWA World tag team belts . . . **Dan Spivey** remains impressive in singles competition against light competition, and continues to be uncertain as to who to tag team with on a regular basis . . . **Jimmy Snuka** is back in action in California . . . **Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake** continue to score slim victories over **The British Bulldogs**, who only seem to get more determined with each match . . . **Stan Hansen** has been bringing a rugged determination to his AWA World title defenses. □

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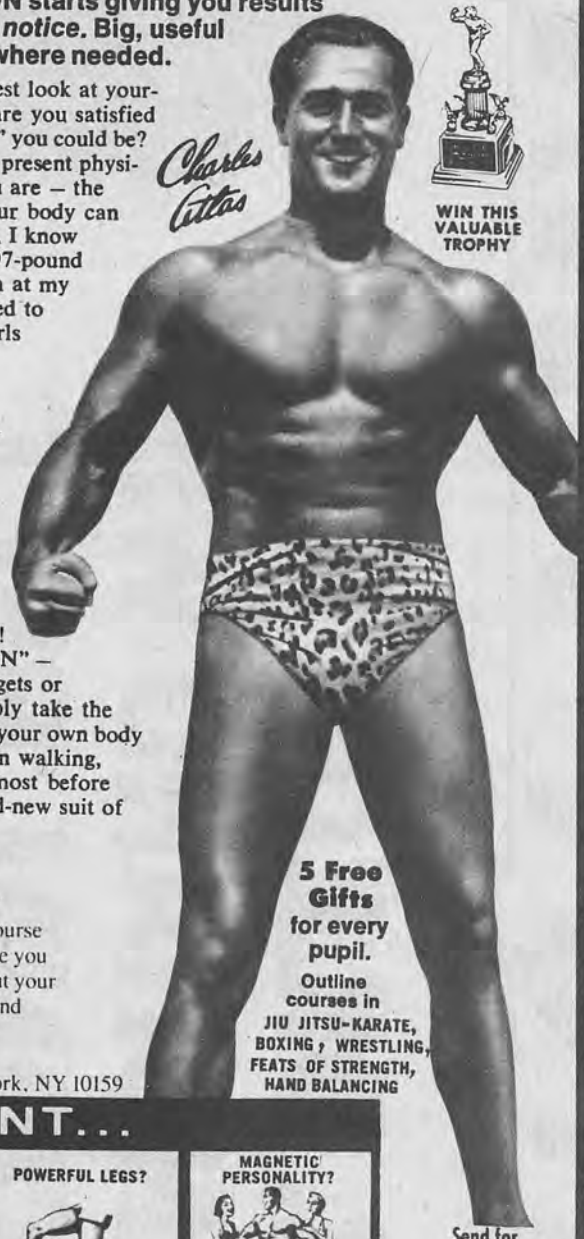

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WHAM! - NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO DRY UP AND BLOW AWAY!
OH, MAC! YOU ARE A REAL MAN AFTER ALL!

VOLUME VII, No. 4 APRIL 1986

WRESTLING ENQUIRER

FLAIR, DILLON HELP BLANCHARD WIN NATIONAL BELT

Dusty Rhodes Felled By Foreign Object

Tully Blanchard credits manager J.J. Dillon with much of his success. Both Dillon and Ric Flair were responsible for his title victory over Dusty Rhodes.

By BILL APTER

SPARTANBURG, SC—A foreign object and the illegal intervention of Ric Flair and J.J. Dillon allowed Tully Blanchard to rally from near defeat to best Dusty Rhodes and capture the National title.

Rhodes appeared to be coasting toward another sucessful title defense when the trouble began. After weakening Blanchard with a superb sleeperhold, Rhodes prepared for the finishing pin. At that moment, Dillon climbed up on the ring apron and threw in a weapon for Blanchard to use. The weapon, however, slipped out of Blanchard's grip and dropped to the floor.

Ric Flair left ringside, where he was doing color commentary, retrieved the weapon and handed it to Blanchard. Brandishing the weapon, Blanchard attacked Rhodes—who had in the mean time gone after Dillon—suplexed him and applied the pin.

Flair and Arn Anderson rushed into the ring to congratulate Blanchard and were soon joined by Baby Doll, who attacked Flair. Dillon grabbed Baby Doll by her hair and threw her to the mat, while Flair mounted the turnbuckle and prepared to kneedrop her. Further carnage was avoided when The Rock n' Roll Express, Sam Houston, and Magnum T.A. ran in and cleared the ring.

Eddie Gilbert Announces Retirement

Eddie Gilbert has found an easier way to riches than wrestling.

By EDDIE ELLNER

TULSA, OK—At an age when most other wrestlers are just breaking into the sport, "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert announced his retirement as an active wrestler.

The 24-year-old Gilbert intends to devote his full attention to managing his burgeoning stable of wrestlers, a promising group that includes Kortsia Korchenko, The Blade Runners, and Tarras Bulba. Gilbert has dubbed his stable "Hotstuff, Inc."

Curiously, the motivating force behind Gilbert's decision has more to do with economy and romance than it does with wrestling. "I have found myself one Sweet Mama," he said. "This babe is beautiful, rich, and in love with yours truly. Every time one of my wrestlers win, Sweet Mama swells my bank account by several grand ones.

"The only stipulation is that I must retire from the ring. Sweet Mama could not stand to see my pretty face injured. As much as I love to mix it up in the ring, I wasn't going to pass up an opportunity like this."

Lawler's Return Prompts Legal Action

By CRAIG PETERS

MEMPHIS, TN—Attorneys for wrestlers Bill Dundee and Buddy Landell are seeking an injunction that would prevent Jerry Lawler from wrestling again in the Mid-Southern area.

"I beat that conniving crumb Lawler in a loser-leave-town match with a stipulation that the loser would have to hightail it for six months," Dundee said. "It hasn't even been three months and that SOB is back wrestling with the full blessing of Mid-Southern officials. What a bunch of crap."

In his return bout, Lawler teamed with Dutch Mantel to defeat Landell and Dundee before a turnaway crowd of 11,500 at the Mid-South Coliseum. According to Landell, the defeat did not inspire the lawsuit. "It had nothing to do with that whatsoever," he claimed. "Besides Lawler owning every referee in this town, he owns every Mid-Southern commissioner. Our only recourse is to take the monkey to court, although it wouldn't surprise me if he owned every judge in Memphis, too.

Jerry Lawler is welcomed back to Memphis by his loyal supporters.

"I wonder what the reaction would be if I had lost the loser-leave-town match and tried to return three months early. They would have lynched me! It's just not fair."

Windham And Rotundo Together Again

By STU SAKS

MINNESOTA—Barry Windham and Mike Rotundo will reunite for the first time in this country since they left the WWF, when they'll appear together April 20 on the AWA's Wrestle-Rock '86 card.

Although no opponents have been named to face the "U.S. Express" as of press time, tickets were selling briskly on the basis of their names alone. Windham and Rotundo just completed a successful one-month tour of Japan, where they overwhelmed the fans and their opponents with their unique blend of speed and brawn. They intend to do the same to the AWA fans.

"I can't wait to get back into an American ring with Mike," Windham said in between training sessions. "It's been too long since we've tagged together in the States.

"Now that the situation in Florida between my family and Kevin Sullivan has calmed down a bit, I'm looking forward to Mike and myself wrestling around the AWA and NWA areas. Maybe we'll even go after The Midnight Express. We could handle those clowns without any problem whatsoever."

AROUND THE GLOBE

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

David Sammartino claims that a quote attributed to him in which he allegedly said that he "refuses to take any more unnecessary matches and just wishes to wrestle his father's old nemesis, Larry Zbyszko" was taken out of context. "I would like to wrestle Zbyszko," he told *Wrestling Enquirer,* "but I'm not about to turn down matches against Stan Hansen—or anybody else for that matter."

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Rick Martel reports that he is "99 pecent recovered" from the back injury that contributed to his loss of the AWA title to Stan Hansen. Rick has been teaming regularly with Dino Bravo and the two hope to go after the Canadian International tag team championship, which has been vacant ever since the Rougeau brothers left for the WWF.

SAN JUAN, PR

Superstar Billy Graham has put in his bid for a series of matches against World Wrestling Council Universal champion Carlos Colon. Graham, who claims he left the Mid-Atlantic region because of the lack of title opportunities there, also plans to grapple in Florida where he has his sights set on Lex Lugar's Southern title.

THE LAST WORD

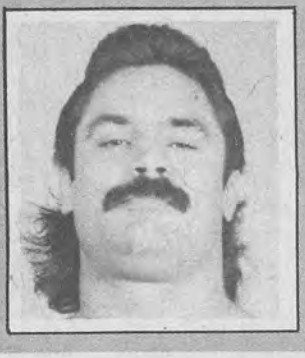
NICK BOCKWINKEL

"There reaches a point in every man's life when principle and conviction take precedent over dollars. I've been offered a six-figure contract to go into private enterprise. I've been offered a lucrative announcing deal with a major network. I can

afford to retire—proudly—on my laurels as a three-time AWA World champion. But I won't surrender the trunks until I run Larry Zbyszko out of this sport. He is a monster, a fiend, and he must be stopped. He must be brought to justice."

RICK RUDE

"I just voted myself the most eligible single man in America. Here I am, without peer, steeped in virility, dripping with machismo, the mere mention of my name enough to warm the cockles of any female within a radius of 55 miles. But draining good looks and a Greek-god



bod is not enough. Now I am the World Class heavyweight champion. Not champion of the Southeast, or the Midwest, or of quadrant 27. I reign over the whole world—in Israel, Egypt, Japan, Europe, Australia, Peoria, and Saskatchewan. My power is insurmountable."

STEVE WILLIAMS

"The last time I was cheered was in fourth grade when I let out a loud belch during an assembly. I figured if a crowd would applaud some gas, then they're not to be trusted. No matter how loud the cheers may get, I'll never regard myself as a fan favorite. I'm in the ring for

one reason and that's to win. Whatever it takes to achieve that victory, I'll do. If my tactics are now fashionable, fine. If tomorrow the crowd should disapprove of my style and renew the hoots, fine. I get paid one way or another. The only thing I care about it is winning."

SUPERFLY JIMMY SNUKA

"Life, my brothers, is good. It was too cold in New York, too lonely for this island man. I got frostbite in every toe on every foot during the winter. Here in Hawaii the weather is nice, the people are nice. And Roddy Piper is here, too, except his name is Jerry

Lawler, brother, and I beat on him the way I used to beat on Piper. The lava of truth will spew from the volcano, brother. There is nothing better than my islands. I miss my old fans, of course, and I send them all my love, the love of the islands."

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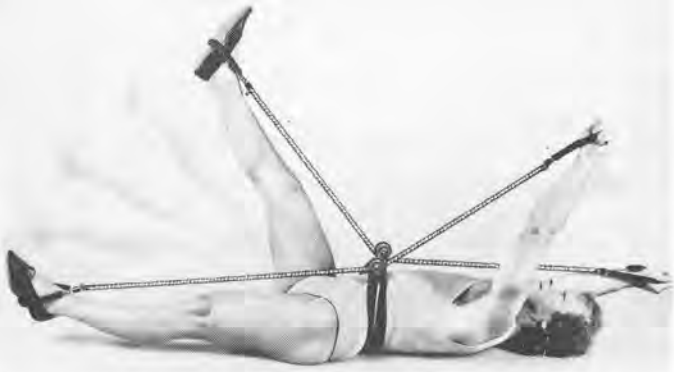

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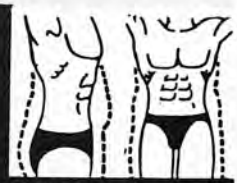

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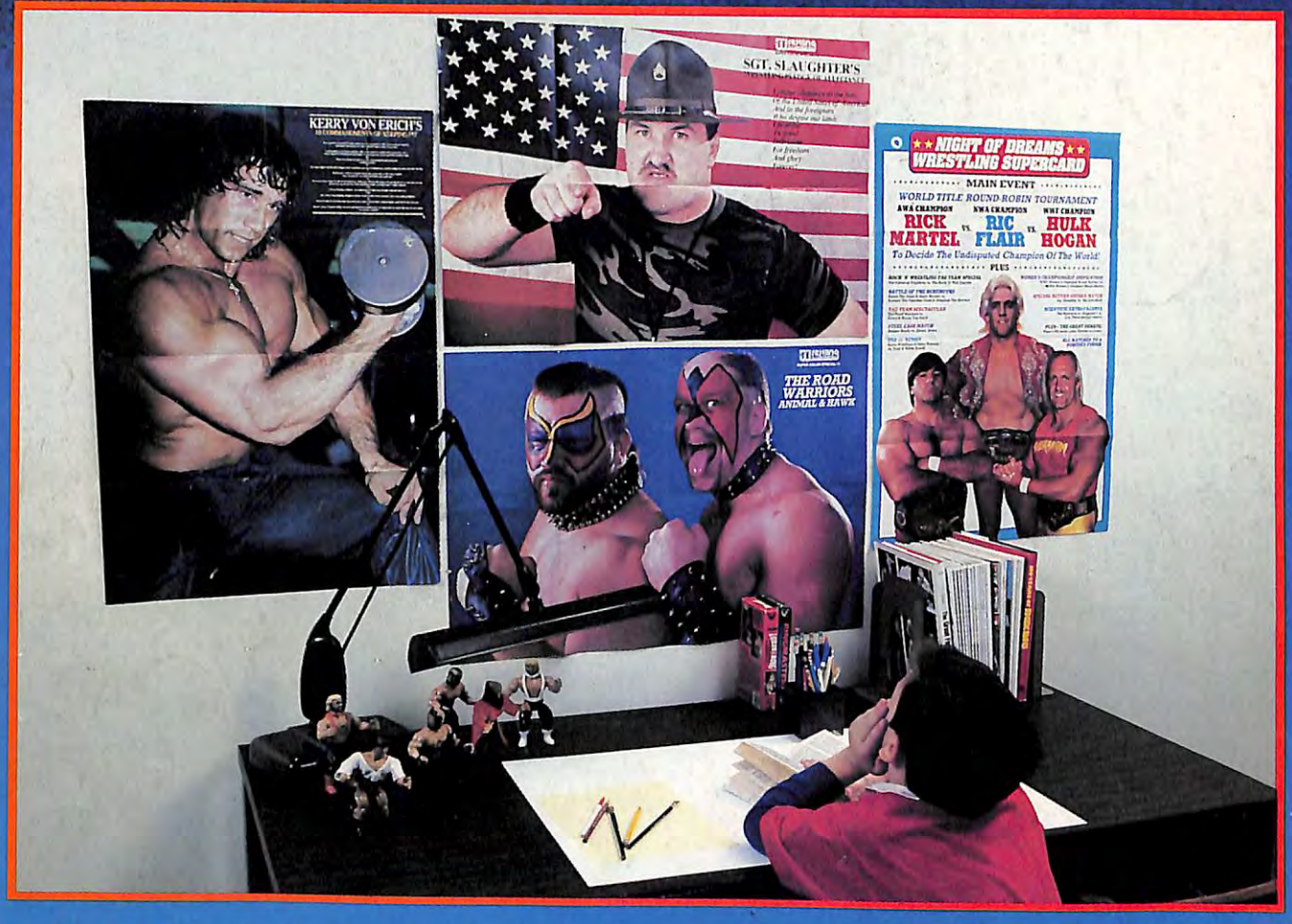
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